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Lord Sinclair

The Most Reverend
Robt. Leighton D. D.
late Arch-Bishop
OF
GLASGOW.
Ætat: 40 1654
R. Strange Sculp.

SELECT WORKS OF *Archbiſhop* LEIGHTON,

Some of which were never before printed.

To which is prefixed

An Account of the AUTHOR's Life and Character.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for DAVID WILSON, and ſold by him and the Bookſellers of *Edinburgh* and *Glaſgow*.

M. DCC. XLVI.

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Lord Lindsay.

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Contents of this Volume.

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Eighteen Sermons.

An Expoſition on the CREED, LORD'S PRAYER, *and* TEN COMMANDMENTS, *with Two Diſcourſes, and Short Catechiſm.*

In which the Errors of the former Edition are corrected.

Ten Sermons, never before publiſhed.

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

I Here offer to your Peruſal ſome of the practical Works of that eminent and worthy Divine Dr. Robert Leighton, *viz.* Eighteen Sermons, *an* Expoſition on the Creed, Lord's Prayer, *and* Ten Commandments, *both which were formerly publiſhed; but the former Edition of theſe being very ſcarce, and but rarely to be met with, it was by the Deſire and Advice of ſeveral judicious and learned Gentlemen, that this new Edition was undertaken.*

In reprinting of theſe, great Care has been taken to rectify ſeveral very groſs Miſtakes and Errors that were in the former Edition.

You have alſo here Ten Sermons *of the ſame Author, never before publiſhed: Any who has read his other Pieces will eaſily diſcern them to be his, as they are wrote with the ſame Spirit of Devotion and Piety which appears in the whole of his Writings.*

I was favoured with the Manuſcript of Nine *of theſe from a worthy and learned Gentleman, who ſays, as far as he remembers, he copied them with his own Hand from the Biſhop's Originals above ſixty Years ago.*

I was obliged to another Gentleman who communicated the Tenth *one to me, who had it in his Poſſeſſion, taken from the Biſhop as he delivered it.*

I have

I have been greatly obliged to two worthy, learned and judicious Miniſters, who took the Charge of correcting this Work, and think myſelf highly indebted to them for the Pains and Labour they took on it.

I take this publick Opportunity of returning my grateful Acknowledgments and ſincere Thanks to all the Ladies *and* Gentlemen *who have been the Encouragers of my Undertaking; I would have printed a* Liſt *of* Subſcribers, *but I thought it was a Piece of Oſtentation few are fond of.*

I have got in my Poſſeſſion ſome more Writings of this valuable Author, which never were printed, and have a View of procuring ſome others, which probably may be communicated to the Publick, along with that very deſerving and juſtly eſteemed Work, his Commentary *on* Peter, *which is now become very ſcarce and ſeldom to be met with.*

You have prefix'd to this Work a Print *of the Author for a Frontiſpiece, as alſo ſome* Account *of his* Life *and* Character.

In ſhort, no Care nor Pains has been ſpared to make this Book as correct and beautiful as poſſible.

As for the Diſcourſes *themſelves of our pious and worthy Author, I doubt not but they will give full Satisfaction to every ſerious and impartial Reader: And their meeting with a kind and favourable Reception from the Publick, will give great Pleaſure to,*

Your moſt humble, and

moſt devoted Servant,

Edinburgh, March 13.

1 7 4 6.

DAVID WILSON.

Some Account of the Life and Character of the Author.

AS this Collection of Archbiſhop *Leighton*'s *Engliſh* Works may probably fall into the Hands of many Readers, who will have little Acceſs otherwiſe to know any thing concerning his Life and Character; the Publiſher is hopeful, that the following Account of him, which is faithfully collected from ſeveral Writers of Note, and chiefly from his intimate Friend and Companion Dr. *Gilbert Burnet*, late Biſhop of *Sarum*, in his *Hiſtory of his own Times*, will not be unacceptable.

Dr. *ROBERT LEIGHTON*, whoſe Life we are to give ſome Account of, was the eldeſt Son of *Alexander Leighton*, a *Scotſman*, Doctor of Divinity, who wrote two Books for which he was called in queſtion; the firſt was intituled, *The Looking-glaſs of holy War*, for which he was made to ſuffer. But the Book that chiefly brought upon him the Wrath of Biſhop *Laud*, and the High Commiſſion Court, was his *Zion's Plea*, or *Appeal to the Parliament*, for which he was condemned in the Star-Chamber to have his Ears cut and his Noſe ſlit, and ſuffered a cruel Impriſonment the Space of eleven Years.

This *ROBERT* was piouſly diſpoſed from his Youth. His Father ſent him to have his Education in *Scotland*, where he made conſiderable Proficiency in the learned Languages, *Latin*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, above his Fellow Students: For *Burnet* ſays, "He had the greateſt Command of the pureſt *Latin* that ever he knew in any Man." His *Prælectiones Theologicæ* are a full Confirmation of this Teſtimony. He had ſo great a Quickneſs of Parts and Vivacity of Apprehenſion, that he made very great Progreſs in his Philoſophical and Theological Works. But that which excelled all the reſt was, he was poſſeſt with the higheſt and nobleſt Senſe of Divine Things that could be ſeen in any Man. He had a Contempt both of Wealth and Reputation, and ſeemed to have the loweſt Thoughts of himſelf poſſible, wiſhing that all others ſhould think as meanly of him as he did himſelf. He bore all Sorts of ill Uſage and Reproach like a Man that took Pleaſure in it. He had

ſo ſubdued the natural Heat of his Temper, that there was ſeldom ſeen in him any Sign of Paſſion; and he kept himſelf in ſuch a conſtant Recollection, that he was never or ſeldom guilty of ſpeaking an idle Word. There was a viſible Tendency in all he ſaid, to raiſe his own Mind, and all he converſed with, to ſerious Reflexions. He ſeemed to be in a perpetual Meditation; and though the whole Courſe of his Life was ſtrict and aſcetical, yet he had nothing of the Sowrneſs of Temper that generally poſſeſſes Men of that Sort. He was the freeſt from Superſtition, from cenſuring others, or of impoſing his own Methods on them, poſſible; ſo that he did not ſo much as recommend them to others. He ſaid, there was a Diverſity of Tempers, and every Man was to watch over his own, and to turn it in the beſt Manner he could. His Thoughts were lively, oft out of the Way, and ſurprizing, yet juſt and genuine. And he had laid together in his Memory the greateſt Treaſure of the beſt and wiſeſt of all the ancient Sayings of the Heathens, as well as Chriſtians, that I have ever known any Man Maſter of, and he uſed them in the apteſt Manner poſſible.

He was bred up in the greateſt Averſion to the whole Frame of the Church of *England*; and no wonder he drank it in, conſidering the unrelenting Cruelties his Father ſuffered from the Biſhops, and the High Commiſſion Court.

When he had finiſhed his Academical Studies in *Scotland*, his Father ſent him to travel in foreign Parts; he ſpent ſome Years in *France*, and ſpoke the *French* Language like one born there.

After his Travels he returned to *Scotland*, and having acquitted himſelf in all the Parts of his Trials for the Miniſtry, to the great Approbation of his Judges, he got Presbyterian Ordination.

He was ordained Miniſter at *Newbottle*, in the Presbytery of *Dalkeith*, about four Miles from *Edinburgh*. His Preaching had a Sublimity of Thought and Expreſſion, as appears from his Sermons and other Works in *Engliſh*, now republiſhed at the Deſire of good Judges. The Grace and Gravity of his Pronunciation was ſuch, that few heard him without a ſenſible Emotion. *Burnet* ſays, " I am ſure I " never did; his Stile was rather too fine: But there was a " Majeſty and Beauty in it that left ſo deep an Impreſſion, " that I cannot yet forget the Sermons I heard him preach " thirty Years ago; and yet with this he ſeem'd to look on " himſelf as ſo ordinary a Preacher, that while he had a

" Cure

" Cure he was ready to employ all others." It ſeems he took great Paihs in preparing Diſcourſes for the Publick, for they are very elaborate Performances. He was very bookiſh, and made a good Choice of Books, which are to be ſeen in his large Library at *Dumblane*. He did not punctually attend the Presbytery, but chus'd rather to live in great Retirement, minding only the Care of his own Pariſh. He preached up a more exact Rule of Life, than ſeemed to many conſiſtent with human Nature; but his own Practice did even outſhine his Doctrine.

In the Year 1648 he declared himſelf for the Engagement for the King, which brought him to no ſmall Trouble; but the Earl of *Lothian*, who lived in his Pariſh, had ſo high an Eſteem for him, that he prevailed with the leading Men not to meddle with him, though he gave Occaſion to great Exception: For when ſome of his Pariſh were ordered to make publick Profeſſion of Repentance for it, he told them, they had been in an Expedition, in which he believed they had neglected their Duty to God, and had been guilty of Injuſtice and Violence, of Drunkenneſs and other Immoralities; and he charged them to repent of theſe very ſeriouſly, without meddling with the Quarrel, or the Grounds of that War. It was a Queſtion asked at the Brethren, both in the claſſical and provincial Meetings of Miniſters, twice in the Year, If they preached the Duties of the Times? And when it was found that Mr. *Leighton* did not, he was quarrelled for this Omiſſion, but ſaid, *If all the Brethren have preached to the* Times, *may not one poor Brother be ſuffered to preach on* Eternity? At laſt, when he could not do the Things impoſed upon him any longer, and being unwilling to live in Strife and Contention, he choſe in a ſilent Manner to withdraw from his Charge and the Eccleſiaſtical Courts, rather than engage in any Diſputes with them.

The Maſterſhip of the College of *Edinburgh* ſometime after falling vacant, and it being in the Gift of the Magiſtrates and Town-Council, he was prevailed with to accept of it, becauſe in it he was propoſed to be entirely free from meddling with the publick Affairs of Church Judicatories: He continued ten Years in that Poſt, and was a great Bleſſing in it; for he diſcourſed to all the Youth of any Capacity or Diſtinction in ſuch a taking Manner, that it had great Effect upon many of them: He prelected often to them; and if Crowds broke in, which they were apt to do,

he would have gone on in his Harangue in *Latin*, with a Purity and Life that charm'd all who underſtood him.

" Thus he had lived above twenty Years in *Scotland* in " the higheſt Reputation (ſays *Burnet*) that any Man in my " Time ever did in that Kingdom."

In the Vacation-time, while he was Principal of the College, he made Excurſions, and came often to *London*, where he obſerved all the eminent Men in *Cromwell*'s Court, and in the ſeveral Parties then about the City, but never ſaw any thing among them that pleaſed him; they were of unquiet and meddling Tempers, and their Diſcourſes were dry and unſavoury, full of airy Cant and bombaſt Swellings. Mr. *Wodrow* gives the following Character of him: " By many he was judged void of any " Doctrinal Principles, and his cloſe Correſpondence with " ſome of his Relations at *Doway* in Popiſh Orders, made " him ſuſpected, as very much indifferent as to all Per- " ſuaſions which bear the Name of *Chriſtian*, and was " much taken with ſome of the Popiſh Myſtic Writers, " and indeed a *Latitudinarian*, and of an over extenſive " Charity." I doubt not but his Opinion was, that the Government of the Church was ambulatory, and not fixed in the holy Scriptures; which was his Error, and the Error of ſome great Divines in *England*, *Hooker*, *Stillingfleet*, and others: But as to the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, any who have read his *Prælectiones Theologicæ*, his Commentary on the firſt Epiſtle of *Peter*, and his other Books, will be perſuaded that he was ſound in the Faith.

As to the Popiſh Myſtic Writers, their Books, abſtracting from ſome Errors in Popery, are ſo full of Piety, Devotion and Morality, delivered in ſuch an engaging and charming Manner, that all admire their Performances; ſuch as, *Drexellius de æternitate*, *Thomas à Kempis de imitatione Chriſti*, Cardinal *Bona*'s *manuductio ad cœlum*, and others.

Biſhop *Burnet* opens up the Correſpondence which he had with *Flanders*, and which was the Occaſion of his being ſuſpected. He ſays, " That *Leighton* ſometimes went " over to *Flanders*, to ſee what he could find in the ſeveral " Orders of the Church of *Rome*. There he found ſome " of *Janſenius*'s Followers, who ſeemed to be Men of " extraordinary Tempers, and ſtudied to bring Things, if " poſſible, to the Purity and Simplicity of the Primitive " Ages, on all which his Thoughts were much fixed."

Shortly

Shortly after the Reſtoration of King *Charles* II. it was propoſed to him, that an Alteration of the Government of the Church of *Scotland* ſhould be made. The Earl of *Clarendon* and the Duke of *Ormond* of the *Engliſh* Peers, and the Earls of *Middleton* and *Glencairn* of the *Scottiſh* Peers, with *Sharp*, were for the Introduction of Prelacy. Whereupon a Letter was writ to the Privy Council of *Scotland*, intimating the King's Intentions for ſetting up Epiſcopacy, and demanding their Advice upon it. The Council, in their Letter to the King, encouraged him to go on, aſſuring him that the Change he intended would give general Satisfaction. This was not true in Fact. Then the next Work was, to ſeek out proper Perſons to be made Biſhops, for all the *Scots* Biſhops before the Year 1638 were dead, except one *Sydſerf* who had been Biſhop of *Galloway*. The *Engliſh* Biſhops had an Averſion to all that had been engaged in the Covenant; however *Sharp*, who had taken the Covenant, nay, the Tender alſo, abjuring the Race of *Stuarts*, and was ſo much confided in by the Church of *Scotland* as to be their Agent for Presbytery, he being ſent by them to the King, firſt in *Holland*, and afterward at *London*, betrayed their Cauſe, and prevailed ſo far, that the Choice of fit Perſons ſhould be left to him. Meſſrs. *Sharp*, *Fairfowl* and *Hamilton* were ſent for, who went up to *England*, *October* 10th 1661. *Leighton* came to *London* from *Bath*, having been there ſome time for his Health. *Sharp* got the Archbiſhoprick of *St. Andrews* ſecured for himſelf, *Fairfowl* was deſired to be Archbiſhop of *Glaſgow*, *Hamilton* (Brother to the Lord *Belhaven*) for *Galloway*, for *Sydſerf* was to be removed to *Orkney*: And *Leighton* made Choice of *Dumblane*, a ſmall Dioceſe, as well as a little Revenue, not exceeding 120 *l. per Annum*; but the Deanry of the Chapel Royal was annexed to that See.

At the Conſecration of theſe Perſons there was great Feaſting and Jollity; with this *Leighton* was ſtruck, and ſaid, *It had not ſuch an Appearance of Serioufneſs or Piety as became the new modelling of a Church.* Biſhop *Burnet* proceeds in his Narration: "I bear ſtill, *ſays he*, the greateſt "Veneration for the Memory of that Man, that I do for a"ny Perſon; and reckon my early Knowledge of him, "which happened the Year after this, and my long and in"timate Converſation with him, that continued to his "Death, for twenty three Years, amongſt the greateſt Bleſ"ſings of my Life, and for which I know I muſt give an

" Account to God in the great Day in a moſt particular " Manner. And yet, though I know this Account of his " Promotion may ſeem a Blemiſh upon him, I would not " conceal it, being reſolved to write of all Perſons and " Things with all poſſible Candour. The Papiſts had Hopes " of him at this Time, having talked of ſome Points of Po- " pery with the Freedom of an abſtracted and ſpeculative " Man, not knowing any thing of the Deſign of bringing " in Popery; yet he expreſſed another Senſe of the Matter, " when he came to ſee, it was really intended to be brought " in amongſt us. He then ſpoke of Popery in the Complex " at much another Rate: And he ſeem'd to have more " Zeal againſt it, than I thought was in his Nature with re- " lation to any Points in Controverſy; for his Abſtraction " made him ſeem cold in all theſe Matters." But he gave " all who converſed with him a very different View of Po- " pery, when he ſaw we were really in Danger of coming " under the Power of a Religion, *that had*, as he uſed to " ſay, *much of the Wiſdom that was earthly, ſenſual and de-* " *viliſh, but nothing in it of the Wiſdom that was from above,* " *and was pure and peaceable*. He did indeed think the " Corruptions and Cruelties of Popery were ſuch groſs and " odious Things, that nothing could have maintained that " Church under theſe juſt and viſible Prejudices, but the " ſeveral Orders among them, which had an Appearance " of Mortification and Contempt of the World, and with " all the Truth that was among them, maintained a Face " of Piety and Devotion. He alſo thought that the great " and fatal Error of the Reformation was, that more of " thoſe Houſes, and of that Courſe of Life, free from " the Entanglements of Vows, and other Mixtures, was " not preſerved; ſo that the Proteſtant Churches had nei- " ther Places of Education, nor Retreat for Men of morti- " fied Tempers."

Leighton made ſome Attempts to work up *Sharp* to two Deſigns, which poſſeſſed him moſt: The one was, to try what could be done towards uniting the Presbyterians and them; he offered *Uſher's Reduction*, as the Plan upon which they ought to form their Schemes. The other was, to try how they could raiſe Men to a truer and higher Senſe of Piety, and bring the Worſhip of that Church out of their *extempore* Methods into more Order, and ſo to prepare them to a more regular Way of Worſhip, which he thought was of much more Importance than a Form of Govern-

ment.

ment. But he was amazed, when he obſerved that *Sharp* had neither formed any Scheme, nor ſeemed ſo much as willing to talk of any.

Leighton came very quickly to loſe all Heart and Hope of doing much Good by this Change, becauſe there appeared in the whole Progreſs of it ſuch croſs Characters of an angry Providence, that how fully ſoever he was ſatisfied in his own Mind, as to Epiſcopacy itſelf, yet it ſeemed that God was againſt them, and that they were not like to be the Men that ſhould build up his Church, ſo that the Strugglings about it ſeemed to him like a fighting againſt God. He who had the greateſt Hand in it, proceeded with ſo much Diſſimulation, and the reſt of the Order were ſo mean and ſelfiſh, and the Earl of *Middleton*, with the other ſecular Men that conducted it, were ſo openly impious and vicious, that it did caſt a Reproach upon every thing relating to Religion, to ſee it managed by ſuch Inſtruments.

Soon after their Conſecration, the Biſhops came down to *Scotland* all in one Coach; but *Leighton* being weary of them, and finding they intended to be received at *Edinburgh* with ſome Pomp, left them at *Morpeth*, and came to *Edinburgh* a few Days before them. He hated all the Appearances of Vanity; he would not have the Title of *Lord* given him by his Friends, and was not eaſy when others forced it upon him: This provoked the other Biſhops, and looked like Singularity and Affectation, and furniſhed theſe that were prejudiced againſt him with a ſpecious Appearance, to repreſent him as a Man of odd Notions and Practices. The Lord Chancellor, with all the Nobility and Privy Counſellors then at *Edinburgh*, went out, together with the Magiſtracy of the City, and brought the Biſhops in, as in Triumph. *Burnet* ſays, "he looked on, and "thought there was ſomething in the Pomp of that Entry "that did not look like the Humility that became their "Function."

The Seſſion of Parliament came on *April* 1662, a Piece of Reſpect was put on the Biſhops, by ſending ſome of every State to invite them to come and take their Seats, they all came except *Leighton*: And indeed he never came to Parliament, but when there was ſomething before them that related to Religion, or to the Church.

For a Proof of the Loyalty of Presbyterian Miniſters, it was reſolved to tender them the Oath of Allegiance and Supre-

Supremacy, that had been enacted in the former Parliament: The Miniſters to whom it was tendered, agreed to take it, with an Explication, which was preſented to the Houſe; but as ſoon as it was read, there were many hard Speeches on it, as putting a Reſtriction on the Oath framed by the Parliament. At this Meeting, which was the only Time that *Leighton* appeared in Parliament, he with much Zeal preſſed that it might be accepted: *For*, ſaid he, *the Words of the Oath were certainly capable of a bad Senſe; that in Compaſſion to Papiſts, a limited Senſe had been put upon them in* England, *and he thought that a like Tenderneſs ſhould be ſhewn to Proteſtants, eſpecially when the Scruple was juſt, and there was an Oath in the Caſe, in which the Matter certainly ought to be made clear. To act otherwiſe, looked like laying Snares for People, and the making them Offenders for a Word.* *Sharp*, in Anſwer to him, ſaid, "It was below "the Dignity of a Government, to make Acts to ſatisfy "the weak Scruples of peeviſh Men: It ill became them, "who had impoſed their Covenants on all People, without "any Explication, and had forced all to take it, now to "expect ſuch extraordinary Favours. *Leighton* inſiſted, *That for that very Reaſon it ought to be done, that all People might ſee a Difference between the mild Proceedings of the Government now, and their Severity: And that it ill became the very ſame Perſons, who had complained of that Rigour, now to practice it themſelves; for thus it may be ſaid, The World goes mad by Turns.*

Theſe Miniſters were committed to cloſe Priſon, three in one Chamber, and three in another, and none permitted to have Acceſs to them for ſeveral Weeks. Great Pains were uſed with them to ſwear the Oath abſolutely, as it ſtood. *Leighton* was ſent to them, who uſed all his Eloquence and Art, but without Succeſs: They charged and checked him with Deſertion, and laying Stumbling-blocks before his Brethren.

In the Year 1665, the Proceedings in *Scotland* by the Eccleſiaſtical High Commiſſion were ſo violent againſt all that would not conform, that *Leighton* would have no Hand in them, but had rather framed a Reſolution to leave his Biſhoprick: He went to *London* to give the King an Account of theſe Proceedings, which, he ſaid, were ſo violent, that he could not concur in the planting of the Chriſtian Religion itſelf in ſuch a Manner, much leſs a Form of Government; he therefore begged Leave to quit his Biſhoprick,

and

and to retire, for he thought he was in ſome Sort acceſſory to the Violences that were done by others, ſince he was one of them, and all was pretended to be done to eſtabliſh them and their Order. The King ſeem'd to be touched with the State the Country was in; he ſpake very ſeverely of *Sharp*, and aſſured *Leighton* he would quickly come to other Meaſures, and put a Stop to theſe violent Methods; but he would by no means ſuffer him to quit his Biſhoprick. So the King gave Orders that the Eccleſiaſtical Commiſſion ſhould be diſcontinued, and ſignified his Pleaſure, that another way of proceeding was neceſſary for his Affairs.

In the Weſt and South of *Scotland* great Severities were uſed, but no Violences were committed in *Leighton*'s Dioceſe: He went round it continually every Year, preaching and catechiſing, from Pariſh to Pariſh: He continued in his private and aſcetick Courſe of Life, and gave all his Income, beyond the ſmall Expences of his own Perſon, to the Poor: He ſtudied to raiſe in his Clergy a greater Senſe of ſpiritual Matters, and of the Care of Souls; and was in all Reſpects a burning and ſhining Light, highly eſteem'd by the greater Part of his Dioceſe: Even the Presbyterians were much mollified, if not overcome, by his mild and heavenly Courſe of Life. Mr. *Wodrow* ſays, "Every Body knew, that while *Leighton* was Biſhop of *Dumblane*, "he had as ſcandalous and ignorant a Clergy as in *Scotland*, "and yet there he never offered to turn one of them out: "As to turning them out by Depoſition, he might meet with "Difficulties from their Friends, and likewiſe from the other Biſhops; but ſurely he cannot be blamed for their "Ignorance and Negligence of their Duty, ſince he gave "them ſo good Example." Mr. *Wodrow* afterwards owns, that when *Leighton* was Archbiſhop of *Glaſgow*, he found that Country full of Complaints of the Scandals of his Clergy there; and appointed a purging Committee to take Trial of ſuch Complaints.

While he was at *Dumblane* he viſited once a Year all the Churches of his Dioceſe, preached and heard the Miniſter preach, gave liberally to the Poor; and if any of his Churches were vacant, if he could, he ſupplied them himſelf. He connived at Mr *Pitcairn* in *Dron*, heard him preach, but would not preach himſelf, leſt he ſhould have made Mr. *Pitcairn*'s Hearers take Offence at him, they being all bigotted Presbyterians; ſo that by his Favour Mr. *Pitcairn* continued at *Dron* till the Teſt.

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In the Weſt of *Scotland* there was a Set of ignorant and ſcandalous Clergy; *Burnet* Archbiſhop of *Glaſgow* had ordained the moſt of them: They were ſo vicious that there was no ſupporting of them; many of them made Bargains with their Pariſhes, and left them, hoping to be provided in *Ireland*. Thus many Pariſhes became vacant. My Lord *Tweeddale*, whom *Lauderdale* truſted moſt, laid out himſelf for redreſſing the many Complaints that were brought againſt the Clergy in thoſe Parts; and looking on *Leighton* as the greateſt and beſt Man among the Biſhops, recommended him to the King to be ſet at the Head of all Church Affairs, that a Set of Men of another Stamp might be ſent to fill up theſe Vacancies. At this Time, *Anno* 1667, *Leighton* was prevailed on to go to *London*, where he had two Audiences of the King, and laid before him the Madneſs of the former Adminiſtration of Church Affairs, and the Neceſſity of turning to more moderate Counſels; he propoſed a Comprehenſion of the Presbyterians, by altering the Terms of Law a little, and by ſuch Abatements as might preſerve the whole for the future, by granting ſomething for the preſent. *Burnet* writes, that in the Year 1669 *Leighton* talked to him of the Meaſures of Moderation and Comprehenſion, and ſays, that he was the only Perſon among the Biſhops that declared for them, and propoſed that a Treaty ſhould be ſet on Foot for accommodating Differences, and changing the Laws, that carried Epiſcopal Authority much higher than any of the Biſhops themſelves put in Practice. He propoſed a Scheme, as he thought might have taken in the ſobereſt Men of Presbyterian Principles; reckoning, that if once the Schiſm could be healed, and Order reſtored, it might be eaſy to bring Things into ſuch Management, that the Conceſſions then to be offered ſhould do no great Hurt at preſent, and ſhould dy with that Generation. He obſerved the extraordinary Conceſſions made by the *African* Church to the *Donatiſts*, and this made him go very far in extenuating the Epiſcopal Authority. He propoſed that the Church ſhould be governed by the Biſhops and their Clergy, mixing together in their Church Judicatories, in which the Biſhop ſhould act only as their Preſident, and be determined by the Majority of their Preſbyters, both in Matters of Juriſdiction and Ordination, and that the Presbyterians ſhould be allowed, when they ſat down firſt in theſe Judicatories, to declare that their ſitting under a Biſhop was ſubmitted to by them only for Peace's ſake,

ſake, with a Reſervation of their Opinion with relation to any ſuch Precedency, and that no negative Vote ſhould be claimed by the Biſhop. That Biſhops ſhould ordain Perſons with the Concurrence of the Presbytery. That Provincial Synods ſit in Courſe every third Year, or oftner, if the King ſhould ſummon them, in which Complaints of the Biſhops ſhould be received, and they ſhould be cenſured as well as other People, and that in a fix'd Court, which was to conſiſt of Biſhops and Deans, and two choſen from every Presbytery. As for the Negative, it might be lodged in the King's Name with ſome ſecular Perſon, who ſhould interpoſe as often as the Biſhop ſaw it was expedient to uſe it. He propoſed farther, that a Treaty might be ſet on Foot for bringing the Presbyterians to accept of theſe Conceſſions. *Burnet* ſays, he was ſent to propoſe the Scheme to *Hutchiſon*, who was eſteemed the learnedeſt Man among them, and to talk of it as a Notion of his own; but he looked on it as a Project that would never take, and being but one of many, he avoided to declare himſelf.

The next Thing under Conſideration was, how to diſpoſe of the many Vacancies, and how to put a Stop to Conventicles. *Leighton* propoſed, that they ſhould ſtill be vacant while the Treaty was on Foot, that the Presbyterians may ſee that the Government was in earneſt to have them ſerve in the Church, when ſo many Places were kept open for them. The Earl of *Tweeddale* thought the Treaty would run into too great a Length, and therefore he propoſed the granting ſome of the outed Miniſters Leave to go and ſerve in theſe Pariſhes, by an Act of Indulgence. *Leighton* was againſt this, for he thought nothing would bring on the Presbyterians to a Treaty, ſo much as the Hopes of being again ſuffered to return to their Benefices. *Burnet* ſays, he was deſired to go into the Weſtern Parts, and to give a true Account of Matters as he found them there: Many of the more moderate of them came to him and talked with him, who thought, that if they were put in vacant Churches, the People would be tamer. He having got the beſt Information of the State of the Country, writes a long Account of all that he heard to the Lord *Tweeddale*; and concluded it with an Advice, to put ſome of the more moderate of the Presbyterians into the vacant Churches. The Letter was ſo well liked, that it was read to the King; and it was ſaid, that he was the Man that went moſt entirely into *Leighton*'s Maxims.

The King wrote a Letter to the Privy Council, ordering them to indulge ſuch of the Presbyterians as were moderate and loyal, ſo far as to ſuffer them to ſerve in vacant Churches, though they did not ſubmit to the preſent Eſtabliſhment: And he required them to ſet them ſuch Rules as might preſerve Order and Peace, and to look well to the Execution of them. And as for ſuch as could not be provided to Churches at that Time, he ordered a Penſion of 20 *l. Sterling* a Year to be paid every one of them, as long as they lived orderly. Nothing followed on the ſecond Article of this Letter: The Presbyterians look'd on this as the King's Hire to be ſilent, and not to do their Duty; and none of them would accept of it. But as to the firſt Part of the Letter, on the firſt Council-day after it was read, twelve of the Miniſters were indulged: They had Pariſhes aſſigned them; and about thirty more were afterwards indulged in the ſame Manner; and then a Stop was put to it for ſome time. With the Warrants that they had for their Churches, there was a Paper of Rules likewiſe put in their Hands. *Hutchiſon*, in all their Names, made a Speech to the Council. He began with decent Expreſſions of Thanks to the King and their Lordſhips. He ſaid, they ſhould at all Times give ſuch Obedience to Laws and Orders, as could ſtand with a good Conſcience. And ſo they were diſmiſſed. As for thoſe of them that were allowed to go to the Churches where they had ſerved before, no Difficulty could be made; but thoſe of them that were named to other Churches, would not enter on the ſerving them, till the Church-Seſſions and the Inhabitants of the Pariſh met, and made Choice of them for their Paſtors, and gave them a Call to ſerve among them.

When this Indulgence came to be diſcanted upon, it appeared to be againſt Law; for by the Act *reſtoring Epiſcopacy*, none were capable of Benefices but ſuch as ſhould own the Authority of Biſhops, and be inſtituted by them. And now the Epiſcopal Party, who were wont to put all Authority in the King, as long as he was for them, began to talk, that the King's Power was bounded by Law, and that theſe Proceedings were the trampling of Law under Foot. *Burnet* Archbiſhop of *Glaſgow* and his Clergy were out of meaſure enraged at the Indulgence. He held a Synod at Glaſgow, *Anno* 1669, when it was moved, that an Addreſs might be drawn up, repreſenting to the King the Miſeries they were under, occaſioned by the Indulgence.

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They complained of it as illegal, and as like to be fatal to the Church. This was, according to the Words in ſome of the Acts of Parliament, as miſrepreſenting the King's Proceedings, in order to the alienating the Hearts of his Subjects from him, which had been made capital. *Roſs*, who was afterwards Archbiſhop of *Glaſgow*, drew the Addreſs, a Copy of this was procured by indirect Methods and ſent up to Court: And as ſoon as the King ſaw it, he ſaid, it was *a new Weſtern Remonſtrance*; and ordered, that *Burnet* ſhould not be ſuffered to come to Parliament, and that he ſhould be proceeded againſt as far as Law could carry the Matter. *Burnet* being on other Accounts obnoxious, they intended to frighten him, to reſign his Biſhopriek.

When the Parliament met, the Supremacy was carried very high; for the Act declared the ſettling all Things relating to the external Government of the Church, was a Right of the Crown. *Leighton* was againſt this Act, and got ſome Words altered in it; yet though he was very averſe to it, he gave his Vote for it, not having ſufficiently conſidered the Extent of the Words, and the Conſequences that might follow; many of the Epiſcopal Clergy, *Nairn* and *Charters* in particular, who thought it plainly made the King our Pope; and the Presbyterians ſaid, it put him in Chriſt's Stead. *Leighton* told *Burnet*, that he was ſure the Words, *Eccleſiaſtical Matters*, were put in after the Draught and Form of the Act was agreed on. It was generally charged on *Lauderdale*.

By this Act of Supremacy he could turn out Biſhops at pleaſure; and it had its firſt Effect on *Burnet*, who was offered a Penſion if he would reſign, but if he ſtood out, was ſeverely threatned; he complied, and returned to a private State, in which he lived four Years.

The Earls of *Lauderdale* and *Tweeddale* preſſed *Leighton* to accept of the See of *Glaſgow*, but he declined it with great Averſion; nothing moved him to hearken to it, but the Hopes of bringing about the Accommodation that was propoſed, in which he had all Aſſiſtance promiſed him from the Court. The King ordered him to be ſent for to Court; upon his coming to *London*, *Lauderdale*'s Temper was much inflamed, he was become fierce and untractable; but *Tweeddale* made every thing as eaſy to him as poſſible. Having turned out Archbiſhop *Burnet*, it concerned them much to get an eminent Man in his Room, who ſhould order Matters with Moderation.

Anno 1670 *Leighton* propoſed to the King his Scheme of Accommodation. *Leighton*'s Paper was in ſome Places corrected by Sir *Robert Murray*, and was turned into Inſtructions; by which *Lauderdale* was authorized to paſs the Conceſſions, that were to be offered, into Laws.

Leighton, though he undertook the Adminiſtration of the See of *Glaſgow*, yet it was a Year after this before he was prevailed on to be tranſlated thither. When he came there, he held a Synod, in which nothing was to be heard but Complaints of Deſertion and ill Uſage.

In a Sermon, and in ſeveral Diſcourſes both publick and private, he exhorted them to look up more to God, and to conſider themſelves as Miniſters of the Croſs of Chriſt, to bear Contempt and ill Uſage with Patience, and to lay aſide all the Appetites of Revenge, to humble themſelves before God, and to have many Days for ſecret Faſting and Prayer, to meet often, that they might queſtion one another in theſe holy Exerciſes. This was a new Strain to the Clergy, to which they had not been accuſtomed.

When this was over, he went round ſome Parts of the Country to the moſt eminent of the indulged Miniſters, and carried *Burnet* with him: His Buſineſs was to perſuade them to hearken to Propoſitions of Peace, and told them that ſome of them would be ſent for to *Edinburgh*, where Terms would be offered them to make up Differences, and if they hearkened to them, they would be turned into Laws, and all the Vacancies would be filled by their Brethren. This they received with Indifference and Neglect. *Hutchiſon* ſaid, *It was a Thing of general Concern, and they were but ſingle Men.*

There were Letters written to ſix of them to come to Town: When they came, there was a long Conference between *Leighton* and them, before *Lauderdale*, *Rothes*, *Tweeddale* and *Kincardine*. *Sharp* would not be preſent, but ordered *Paterſon*, afterwards Archbiſhop of *Glaſgow*, to hear all and bring him an Account of what paſſed. *Leighton* laid before them the Miſchief of Schiſm, and ſaid, that every one ought to do all he can to heal the wide Breach; that they had Moderators among them, that the King might name theſe, and make them conſtant; and that in ſubmitting to this, they ſhould be allowed to declare their Opinion againſt this Precedency. *Hutchiſon* ſaid, "That their O-"pinion for a Parity among the Clergy was well known, "and that the Precedency now ſpoken of had made Way

"to

" to a Lordly Dominion in the Church; and desired some " Time might be given them to consider well of the Propo- " sitions now made, and that they might have the King's " Leave to meet." This was granted. There was a second Conference, in which Matters were more fully opened and pressed home, but without Effect; *Sharp* cried out, *That Episcopacy was to be undermined, since the Negative was to be let go.*

In the Year 1672 *Leighton* resolved to retire and leave his See; for *Sharp* and his Instruments, from *Leighton*'s Moderation, did complain. He concluded, he could do no Good on either Side; he gained no Ground on the Presbyterians, and was suspected, nay hated, by the Episcopal Party, and therefore resolved to retire from all publick Employments, and to spend the rest of his Days in a Corner, and to give himself wholly to Prayer and Meditation, since he could not carry on his great Designs of healing and reforming the Church, which he had so much at Heart: He said, his Work seem'd to be at an End; he had no more to do, unless he had a Mind to please himself with the lazy enjoying a good Revenue. He had gathered together many Instances out of Church History, of Bishops that had left their Sees and retired from the World, and was much pleased with these. He followed *Lauderdale* to Court, and begged Leave to resign his Archbishoprick; but when *Lauderdale* would by no means consent to this, he desired he might be allowed to do it within a Year, who moved the King to promise, That if he did not change his Mind, he would then accept of his Resignation: He came back much pleased with what he had thus obtained.

Leighton came up to *London*, at the End of the Year 1673, to quit his Archbishoprick; his Resignation was accepted, and *Burnet* made such Submissions that he was restored.

Leighton retired to a private House in *Sussex*, where he lived ten Years in a most heavenly Manner, and with a shining Conversation.

When Lord *Perth* came to *London* to be made Lord Chancellor of *Scotland*, Dr. *Burnet* had a very earnest Message from him, desiring by his means to see *Leighton*. *Burnet* wrote so earnestly to him that he came to *London*, who was amazed to see him, at above Seventy Years of Age, look so fresh and well. His Hair was still black, and all his Motions were lively. He had the same Quickness of Thought, and Strength of Memory, but above all, the same

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Heat and Life of Devotion he had ever ſeen in him. When *Burnet* took Notice to him, upon his firſt ſeeing him, how well he look'd, he ſaid, *He was very near his End for all that; and his Work and Journey both were now almoſt done.* The next Day he was taken with an Oppreſſion, and as it ſeemed, with Cold and with Stitches, which was indeed a Pleuriſy.

The next Day *Leighton* ſunk ſo, that both Speech and Senſe went away of a ſudden; and he continued panting above twelve Hours, and then died without Pangs or Convulſions, in 1684.

Biſhop *Burnet* gives the following Character of him: "Thus I loſt him who had been for ſo many Years the "chief Guide of my whole Life. He had lived ten Years "in *Suſſex* in great Privacy, dividing his Time wholly be"tween Study and Retirement, and the doing of Good; "for in the Pariſh where he lived, and in the Pariſhes round "about he was always employed in Preaching, and read"ing Prayers. He diſtributed all he had in Charities, "chuſing rather to have it go through other Peoples "Hands than his own; for (ſays *Burnet*) I was his Al"moner in *London*. He had gathered a well choſen Li"brary of curious as well as uſeful Books, which he left "to the Dioceſe of *Dumblane*, for the Uſe of the Clergy "there, that Country being ill provided with Books. He "lamented often to me (ſays the ſame accurate and judi"cious Author) the Stupidity that he obſerved among the "Commons of *England*, who ſeemed to be much more "inſenſible in the Matters of Religion, than the Commons "of *Scotland* were. He retained ſtill a peculiar Inclination "to *Scotland*: And if he had ſeen any Proſpect of doing "Good there, he would have gone and lived and died a"mong them. In the ſhort Time that the Affairs of *Scot*"*land* were in the Duke of *Monmouth*'s Hands, that Duke "had been poſſeſſed with ſuch an Opinion of him, that he "moved the King to write to him, to go, and at leaſt live "in *Scotland*, if he would not engage in a Biſhoprick there: "But that fell with that Duke's Credit. He was in his laſt "Years turned to a greater Severity againſt Popery, than "I had imagined a Man of his Temper and of his Large"neſs in Point of Opinion was capable of. He ſpoke of "the Corruptions of the ſecular Spirit, and of the Cruelty "that appeared in that Church, with an extraordinary Con"cern; and lamented the ſhameful Advances that we

"ſeemed

" ſeemed to be making towards Popery. He did this with " a Tenderneſs and with an Edge, that I did not expect " from ſo recluſe and mortified a Man. He looked on " the State the Church of *England* was in, with very me- " lancholy Reflexions, and was very uneaſy at an Expreſ- " ſion then much uſed, *That it was the beſt conſtituted* " *Church in the World:* He thought it was truly ſo, with " relation to the Doctrine, the Worſhip, and the main " Part of our Government; but as to the Adminiſtration, " both with relation to the Eccleſiaſtical Courts and the " Paſtoral Care, he looked on it as one of the moſt corrupt " he had ever ſeen. He thought we looked like a fair " Carcaſe of a Body without a Spirit, without that Zeal, " that Strictneſs of Life, and that Laborioufneſs in the " Clergy that (ſays *Burnet*) became us."

There were two remarkable Circumſtances in his Death. He uſed often to ſay, That if he were to chuſe a Place to dy in, it ſhould be an Inn, it looking like a Pilgrim's going home, to whom this World was all as an Inn, and who was weary of the Noiſe and Confuſion in it. He added, that the officious Tenderneſs and Care of Friends was an Entanglement to a dying Man; and that the unconcerned Attendance of thoſe that could be procured in ſuch a Place, would give leſs Diſturbance. And he obtained what he deſired, for he died at the *Bell-Inn* in *Warwick-Lane*.

Another Circumſtance was, that while he was Biſhop in *Scotland*, he took what his Tenants were pleaſed to pay to him: So that there was a great Arrear due, which was raiſed ſlowly by one whom he left in Truſt with his Affairs there; and the laſt Payment that he could expect from thence was returned up to him about ſix Weeks before his Death: So that his Proviſion and Journey failed both at once.

SERMON

SERMON I.

PREFACE.

MANY and great are the Evils that lodge within the Heart of Man, and they come forth abundantly both by the Tongue and by the Hand, yet the Heart is not emptied of them; yea, the more it vent them outwardly, the more they increaſe within. Well might He that knew the Heart ſo well, call it an *evil Treaſure*. We find the Prophet *Ezekiel* in his 8th *Chap.* led by the Lord in Viſion to *Jeruſalem*, to view the Sins of the *Jews* that remained in time of the Captivity, when He had ſhewed him one Abomination, He cauſed him to dig through the Wall, to enter and diſcover more, and ſo directed him ſeveral times, from one Place to another, and ſtill ſaid, *I will ſhew thee yet greater Abominations.* Thus is it with thoſe, whom the Lord leads into an Examination of their own Hearts (for Men are uſually Strangers to themſelves) by the Light of his Word and Spirit going before them, He lets them ſee Heaps of Abominations in every Room, and the vileſt in the moſt retired and darkeſt Corners: And truly ſhould He leave them there, they would deſpair of Remedy. No, He makes this Diſcovery on purpoſe that they ſhould ſue to him for Help. Do ſo then as many as have taken any notice of the Evils of your own Hearts: Tell the Lord they're his own Works; *He*

formed the Heart of Man within him, and they are his own Choice too, *My Son give me thy Heart.* Intreat him to redreſs all thoſe Abuſes wherewith Satan and Sin have filled it, and then, to take Poſſeſſion of it himſelf, for therein conſiſts its Happineſs. This is, or ſhould be, a main End of our Reſortings to his Houſe and Service. Wrong not your ſelves ſo far as to turn theſe ſerious Exerciſes of Religion into an idle Divertiſement. What a Happineſs were it, if every Time you come to his ſolemn Worſhip, ſome of your ſtrongeſt Sins did receive a new Wound, and ſome of your weakeſt Graces a new Strength!

JAMES III. 17.

But the Wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocriſy.

Gen. iii. 5. GOD *doth know, that in the Day that ye ſhall eat thereof, your Eyes ſhall be opened, and ye ſhall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil,* was the firſt hiſſing of that old Serpent, by which he poiſoned Mankind in the Root. Man not contented with the Impreſſion of God's Image in which he was created, loſt it by catching at a Shadow: Climbing higher than his Station, he fell far below it: Seeking to be more than Man, to become as God, he made himſelf leſs than Man: *He lodged not a Night in Honour, but became as the Beaſts that periſh*, Pſ. xlix. 12. Ever ſince, Nature's beſt Wiſdom is full of Impurity, Turbulency and Diſtemper; nor can any thing rectify it, but a Wiſdom from above, that both cleanſeth and compoſeth the Soul, *it is firſt pure, and then peaceable.*

This Epiſtle, as ſome that follow, is called *General*, both by reaſon of the Diſperſion of the Parties to whom

whom it is addreſs'd, and the Univerſality of the Subject which it treats: Containing a great Number (if not all) of the neceſſary Directions and Comforts of a Chriſtian's Life, both from the active and paſſive Part of it. 'Tis evident that the Apoſtle's main Deſign is, to arm the diſperſed *Jews* againſt all Kinds of Temptations, both theſe of *Affliction*, in the 1ſt *Chap.* at the 2d *Verſe*, and *ſinful Temptations*, *Ver.* 13th. And having diſcourſed of two ſpecial Means of ſtrengthening them againſt both, *ſpeaking to God in Prayer*, and *hearing God ſpeak in his Word*, in the two laſt *Verſes* of that 1ſt *Chap.* he recommends, as chief Duties of Religion, and ſure Evidences of Integrity in Religion, firſt *Meekneſs*, and *Moderation* chiefly in their Speeches, and then *Charity* and *Purity* in their *Actions*; inſiſting largely upon the latter, in the 2d *Chap.* and upon the former, the ruling of the *Tongue* in this 3d *Chap.* and here towards the End of it he ſhews the true oppoſite Spring of Miſcarriage in Speech and Action, and of right ordering and regulating of both. Evil Converſation, Strifes and Envyings are the Fruits of a baſe Wiſdom that is *earthly*, *ſenſual* and *deviliſh*, *Ver.* 15th; but *Purity*, *Meekneſs* and *Mercy* are the proper Effects and certain Signs of heavenly Wiſdom.

The Wiſdom that is from above, *is firſt pure*, its Gentleneſs can agree with any thing except *Impurity*: Then it is *peaceable*, it offends no body, except *Purity* offend them: it is not raging and boiſterous. It is not only *pure*, being void of that Mire and Dirt, which the wicked are ſaid to caſt out like the Sea, *Iſa.* lvii. 20. but *peaceable* likewiſe, not ſwelling, and reſtleſs like the Sea, as is there ſaid of the wicked. Nor is it only *peaceable* negatively, *not offending*, but as the Word bears εἰρηνικὴ *pacifick*, diſpoſed to make and ſeek *Peace*; and as it readily offends none, ſo it is not eaſily offended. 'Tis *gentle* and *moderate* ἐπιεικὴς,

and if offended, εὐπειθὴς, *eaſily intreated* to forgive: And as it eaſily paſſeth by Mens Offences, ſo it doth not paſs by, but *looks upon their Diſtreſſes and Wants*, as full of Compaſſion, as it is free from unruly and diſtemper'd Paſſions. Nor reſts it in an affecting Sympathy, its *Mercy* is helpful, full of Mercy, *and good Fruits:* And it both *forgives* and *pities*, and *gives: without Partiality, and without Hypocriſy*, [ἀδιάκριτος καὶ ἀνυπόκριτος] the Word ἀδιάκριτος may as well bear another Senſe, no leſs ſuiting both with this Wiſdom and theſe its other Qualities; that is, *not taking upon it a cenſorious diſcerning and judging of others.* They that have moſt of this Wiſdom are leaſt rigid to thoſe that have leſs of it. I know no better Evidence of Strength in Grace, than to bear much with thoſe that are weak in it. And laſtly, as it ſpares the Infirmities of others, ſo it makes not falſe and vain Shews of its own Excellencies, 'tis *without Hypocriſy*. This denies two Things, both *Diſſimulation* and *Oſtentation*. The Art of *Diſſembling* or *Hypocrite-craft* is no part of this Wiſdom: And for the other, *Oſtentation*, ſurely the Air of Applauſe is too light a Purchaſe for ſolid Wiſdom. The Works of this Wiſdom may be ſeen, yea they ſhould be ſeen, and may poſſibly be now and then commended; but they ſhould not be done for that low End, either to be ſeen or to be commended. Surely no, being of ſo noble Extraction; this having deſcended from Heaven, will be little careful for the Eſtimation of thoſe that are of the Earth, and are but too often of the Earth, earthly.

The due Order of handling theſe Particulars more fully cannot well be miſs'd: Doubtleſs the *Subject*, *Wiſdom from above*, requires our *firſt* Conſideration, next the *excellent Qualities* that are attributed to it, and laſtly their *Order* is to be conſidered; the rather becauſe ſo clearly expreſt, *firſt pure, then peaceable*, &c.

Wiſdom

Wiſdom from above] There be two things in that: There's the general Term of *Wiſdom* common to divers ſorts of Wiſdom, tho' moſt eminently and truly belonging to this beſt Wiſdom. Then there is the *Birth* or *Original* of this Wiſdom, ſerving as its Difference to ſpecify and diſtinguiſh it from all the reſt, *Wiſdom from above*. *Wiſdom* in the general is a very plauſible Word among Men: Who is there that would not willingly paſs for wiſe, yea often thoſe that are leaſt of all ſuch are moſt deſirous to be accounted ſuch; and where this fails them, they uſually make up that Want in their own Conceit, and ſtrong Opinion. Nor do Men only thus love the Reputation of Wiſdom, but they naturally deſire to be wiſe, as they do to be happy; yet through corrupt Nature's Blindneſs, they do as naturally miſtake and fall ſhort both of the one and the other; and being once wrong, the more Progreſs they make, they are further out of the way: And pretending to Wiſdom in a falſe way, they ſtill befool themſelves, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* i. 22. φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοὶ ἐμωράνθησαν, *Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became Fools.*

Our Apoſtle, *ver.* 15. ſpeaking of that wicked Wiſdom, that is fruitful of Wrongs, Striſes, and Debates, and that is only abuſively to be called *Wiſdom*, ſhews what kind of Wiſdom it is, by three notable Characters, *Earthly*, *Natural*, and *Deviliſh*; which tho' they be here jointly attributed to one and the ſame Subject, yet we may make Uſe of them to ſignify ſome Differences of falſe Wiſdom. There is an *Infernal*, or *Deviliſh Wiſdom*, proper for contriving Cruelties and Oppreſſions, or ſubtile Shifts and Deceits, that make Atheiſm a main Baſis and Pillar of State Policy; ſuch are thoſe *that deviſe Miſchief upon their Beds*, &c. *Mic.* ii. This is Serpentine Wiſdom, not joined with, but moſt oppoſite to the Dove-like Simplicity. There is an *Earthly* Wiſdom that

draws

draws not ſo deep in Impiety, as that other, yet is ſufficient to keep a Man out of all Acquaintance with God and Divine Matters, and is drawing his Eye perpetually downwards, employing him in the Purſuit of ſuch things as cannot fill the Soul, except it be with Anguiſh and Vexation, *Ezek.* xxviii. 4, 5. That Dexterity of gathering Riches, where it is not attended with the Chriſtian Art of right uſing them, abaſes Mens Souls and indiſpoſes them wholly for this Wiſdom that is from above. There is a *natural Wiſdom* far more plauſible than the other two, more harmleſs than that helliſh Wiſdom, and more refined than that earthly Wiſdom, yet no more able to make Man holy and happy than they; *Natural* ψυχικὴ it is the Word the Apoſtle St. *Paul* uſeth 1 *Cor.* ii. ἄνθρωπος ψυχικός, naming the *natural Man* by his better Part, his Soul; intimating that the Soul, even in the higheſt Faculty of it, the Underſtanding, and that in the higheſt Pitch of excellency to which Nature can raiſe it, is blind in ſpiritual Objects; things that are above it, cannot be known but by a *Wiſdom from above.* Nature neither affords this Wiſdom, nor can it of itſelf acquire it. This is to advertiſe us, that we miſtake not *Morality and common Knowledge*, even of Divine things, for *the Wiſdom that is from above.* This may raiſe a Man high above the Vulgar, as the Tops of the higheſt Mountains leave the Vallies below them; yet is it ſtill as far ſhort of true ſupernatural Wiſdom, as the higheſt Earth is of the higheſt Sphere. There is one main Point of the Method of this Wiſdom that is of moſt hard Digeſtion to a natural Man, and the more natural wiſe he be, the worſe he likes it, *If any Man would be wiſe, let him become a Fool that he may become wiſe*, 1 Cor. iii. 18. There is nothing gives Nature a greater Prejudice againſt Religion than this initial Point of Self-denial: When Men of eminent

nent Learning or the ſtrong Politicians hear, *that if they will come to Chriſt, they muſt renounce their own Wiſdom to be fit for his*, many of them go away as ſorrowful as the young Man, when he heard of ſelling all his Goods and giving them to the Poor.

Jeſus Chriſt is that eternal and ſubſtantial Wiſdom that came from above, to deliver Men from periſhing in their affected Folly, as you find it at large, *Prov.* viii. St. *Paul* in the 1ſt *Chap.* of his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* calls him *the Wiſdom of God*, *ver.* 24. that ſhews his Excellency in himſelf, and *ver.* 30. he tells us that *he is made of God our Wiſdom*; that ſhews his Uſefulneſs to us; and by him alone is this infuſed Wiſdom from above conveyed to us, *In him are the hid Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*, Col. ii. 3. *And from his fulneſs* (if at all) *we all receive Grace for Grace*; and of all Graces, firſt ſome Meaſures of this Wiſdom, without which no Man can know himſelf, much leſs can he know God. Now this ſupernatural Wiſdom hath in it both Speculation and Prudence: It is contemplative and practical. Theſe two muſt not be ſeparated, *I Wiſdom dwell with Prudence*, Prov. viii. 12. This Wiſdom in its contemplative Part reads Chriſt much, and diſcovers in him a new World of hidden Excellencies unknown to this old World. *There are Treaſures of Wiſdom in him*, Col. ii. 3. but they are *hid*, and no Eye ſees them, but that which is enlightened with this Wiſdom: No, it is impoſſible, as one ſays, τὰ θεῖα γνῶναι κρύπτοντος θεοῦ *To know divine things while God concealeth them.* *Sophocles.* But when the renewed underſtanding of a Chriſtian is once initiated into this Study, it both grows daily more and more apprehenſive, and Chriſt becomes more communicative of himſelf, and makes the Soul acquainted with the amiable Countenance of his Father in him reconciled. *No*

Man

Man hath ſeen God at any Time, the only begotten Son which is in the Boſom of the Father, he hath declared him, St. John i. 18. What wonder if the unlettered, and deſpiſed Chriſtian know more of the Myſteries of Heaven, than the Naturaliſt, tho' both wiſe and learned? Chriſt admits the Believer into his Boſom, and *He* is in the Boſom of the Father. But withal know, that all this Knowledge tho' ſpeculatively high, yet deſcends to Practice; as it learns what God is, ſo it thence teacheth Man, what he ſhould be: This Wiſdom flows from Heaven, and a heavenly Converſation flows from it, as we find it there charactered by theſe practical Graces of *Purity*, *Peace*, *Meekneſs*, &c.

This Wiſdom repreſents to us, the *Purity* of God's Nature, 1 *John* iii. 3. It gives the Soul an Eye to ſee the Comelineſs and Beauty of *Purity*, as the Philoſopher ſaid of Virtue, to the end it might be loved, he would wiſh no more but that it could be ſeen. And as it thus morally perſwades, ſo by an inſenſible Virtue it aſſimilates the Soul to Chriſt, by frequent Contemplation. It alſo produces all the Motives to Holineſs and Obedience; it begets theſe precious Qualities in the Soul; it giveth a Chriſtian a View of the matchleſs Virtues that are in Chriſt, and ſtirs him up to a diligent, though imperfect Imitation of them; it ſets before us Chriſt's ſpotleſs *Purity*, in whoſe Mouth there was no Guile, and ſo invites us to *Purity*; it repreſents the perpetual Calmneſs of his Spirit, that no Tempeſt could reach to diſturb it; *in his Mouth there was no contentious Noiſe, his Voice was not heard in the Streets*, and this recommends *Peaceableneſs* and *Gentleneſs*, and ſo in the reſt here mentioned.

Hence I conceive may be fitly learned for our Uſe, ſeeing here is a due Wiſdom and Knowledge neceſſary for Guidance, and directing in the Ways of

of *Purity* and *Peace*; it is evident that groſs Ignorance cannot conſiſt with the Truth of Religion much leſs can it be a Help and Advantage to it. I ſhall never deny that a falſe ſuperſtitious Religion ſtands in need of it; "not too much Scripture-wiſ-"dom for the People." The Pomp of that vain Religion, like Court Masks, ſhews beſt by Candle-light; fond Nature likes it well; the Day of ſpiritual Wiſdom would diſcover its Impoſture too clearly. But to let their foul Devotion paſs, (for ſuch it muſt needs be that is born of ſo black a Mother as Ignorance) let this Wiſdom at leaſt be juſtified of theſe that pretend to be her Children. 'Tis lamentable that amongſt us, where Knowledge is not withheld, Men ſhould, thro' Sloth and Love of Darkneſs, deprive themſelves of it. What abundance of almoſt brutiſh Ignorance is amongſt the Commons? and thence Uncleanneſs, and all Manner of Wickedneſs; a Darkneſs that both hides and increaſeth Impurity. What's the Reaſon of ſo much Impiety and Iniquity in all Places, but the Want of the Knowledge of God? *Hoſea* iv. 1, 2. And 2 *Theſ.* i. 8. *not knowing Jeſus Chriſt*, and *not obeying his Goſpel* are joined together. It will be found true, that where there is no Obedience, there is no right Knowledge of Chriſt: But out of all queſtion where there is not a Competency of Knowledge, there can be no Obedience; and as theſe two lodge together, ſo obſerve what attends them both, *ibid. He ſhall come in flaming Fire to render Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

And if there be any that think to ſhroud unpuniſhed amongſt the Thickets of Ignorance, eſpecially amidſt the Means of Knowledge, take notice of this, though it may hide the Deformity of Sin from your own Sight for a Time, it cannot palliate it from the piercing Eye, nor cover it from the revenging Hand

of Divine Juſtice. As you would eſcape then that Wrath to come, come to Wiſdom's School, and how ſimple ſoever ye be as to this World, if you would not periſh with the World, learn to be *wiſe* unto Salvation.

And truly it is mainly important for this Effect, That the Miniſters of the Goſpel be active and dextrous in imparting this Wiſdom to their People. If they would have their Converſation to be holy, and peaceable, and fruitful, *&c.* the moſt expedient Way is once to principle them well in the Fundamentals of Religion, for therein is their great Defect. How can they walk evenly and regularly ſo long as they are in the Dark? One main thing is to be often pointing at the Way to Chriſt, the Fountain of this Wiſdom. *Without this you bid them be clothed, and clothe them not.*

How needful then is it that Paſtors themſelves be *Seers* indeed, as the Prophets were called of old; not only faithful but wiſe Diſpenſers, as our Saviour ſpeaks, St. *Luke* xii. 42. *That they be* διδακτικοὶ, *able and apt to teach.* 1 *Tim.* iii. 2. Laudable is the Prudence, that tries much the Churches Store-houſes, the Seminaries of Learning; but withal, it is not to be forgot, that as a due Furniture of Learning is very requiſite for this Employment, ſo it is not ſufficient. When one is duly enriched that Way, there is yet one thing wanting that grows not in Schools: Except this infuſed Wiſdom from above ſeaſon and ſanctify all other Endowments, they remain κοιναὶ, common and unholy, and therefore unfit for the Sanctuary. Amongſt other weak Pretences to Chriſt's Favour in the laſt Day, This is one, *We have preached in thy Name*, yet ſays Chriſt, *I never knew you*; ſurely then they knew not him, and yet they preached him. Cold and lifeleſs (though never ſo fine and well contrived,) muſt thoſe Diſcourſes be, that are of an *unknown*

known Chriſt. Paſtors are called Angels, and therefore, though they uſe the ſecondary Helps of Knowledge, they are mainly to bring their Meſſage from above from the Fountain, the Head of this pure Wiſdom.

Pure] If it come from above it muſt needs be *pure originally*, yea it is *formally pure* too, being a main Trait of God's renewed Image in the Soul. By this Wiſdom the Underſtanding is both refined, and ſtrengthened to entertain right Conceptions of God in his Nature and Works. And this is primarily neceſſary, that the Mind be not infected with falſe Opinions in Religion; if the Spring-head be polluted, the Streams cannot be *pure*; it is more important than Men uſually think for a good Life. But that which I ſuppoſe is here chiefly intended is, that it is *effectively* and *practically pure*, *it purifies the Heart*, Act. 15. 9. (ſaid of *Faith* which in ſome Senſe and Acceptation differs not much from this Wiſdom) and conſequently the *Words*, and *Actions* that flow from the Heart.

This *Purity* ſome render *Chaſtity*. The Wiſdom from above is *chaſte*, ἁγνὴ. The Word is indeed often ſo taken and includes that here, but it is too narrow a Senſe to reſtrict it to that only. It is here an univerſal Deteſtation of all Impurity, both of Fleſh and Spirit, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, 2 *Cor.* vii. 1. Pride, Self-love, Profaneneſs of Spirit and Irreligion, tho' they do not ſo properly pollute the Body as carnal Uncleanneſs; yet they do no leſs defile the Soul, and make it abominable in the Sight of God. Thoſe Apoſtate Angels called *unclean Spirits*, are incapable of bodily Defilement (tho' indeed they tempt and inveigle Men to it;) their own inherent Pollutions muſt needs be ſpiritual, for they are Spirits. *Idolatry* in Scripture goes often under the Name of *Fornication* and *Adultery*, and indeed theſe Sins may mutually

borrow and lend their Names the one to the other; Idolatry may well be called *ſpiritual Unchaſtity*; and unchaſte Love, *carnal Idolatry*. Earthly-mindedneſs likewiſe is an Impurity of the Soul; in the Apoſtle's Phraſe, Covetouſneſs is Idolatry, and ſo a ſpiritual Pollution; yea it may well ſhare with Idolatry in its borrowed Name, and be called Adultery too; for it misbeſtows the Soul's prime Affection upon the Creature, which by Right is God's peculiar.

This Purity that true Wiſdom works is contrary to all Pollution. We know then in ſome Meaſure what it is, it reſts to enquire where it is, and there is the difficulty; it is far eaſier to deſign it in itſelf, than to find it among Men, *Who can ſay, I have made my Heart clean? Prov.* xx. 9. Look upon the greateſt part of Mankind, and you may know at firſt Sight, that Purity is not to be lookt for among them, they ſuffer it not to come near them, much leſs to dwell with them and within them; they hate the very Semblance of it in others, and themſelves delight in Intemperance and all Manner of Licentiouſneſs, like fooliſh Children ſtriving who ſhall go furtheſt into the Mire; theſe cannot ſay they have made clean their Hearts, for all their Words and Actions will bely them. If you come to the mere Moraliſt, the *World's honeſt Man*, and ask him, it may be, he will tell you, he hath cleanſed his Heart, but believe him not. It will appear he is not yet cleanſed, becauſe he ſays he has done it himſelf, for (you know) there muſt be ſome other, beſides Man, at this Work. Again he riſing no higher than Nature, hath none of this heavenly Wiſdom in him, and therefore is without this Purity too. But if you chance to take Notice of ſome well skilled Hypocrite, every thing you meet with makes you almoſt confident, that *there* is Purity; yet if he be ſtrictly put to't, he may make ſome good Account

count of the Pains he hath taken to refine his Tongue and his publick Actions, but he dare not ſay he hath made clean his Heart, it troubles his Peace to be askt the Queſtion. He never intended to baniſh Sin, but to retire it to his innermoſt and beſt Room, that ſo it might dwell unſeen within him, and where then ſhould it lodge but in his Heart? Yet poſſibly becauſe what's outward is ſo fair, and Man cannot look deeper to contradict him, he may embolden himſelf, to ſay he's inwardly ſuitable to his Appearance; but there is a Day at hand that ſhall to his endleſs Shame at once diſcover both his ſecret Impurity and his Impudence in denying it.

After theſe, there follows a few deſpiſed and melancholly Perſons (at leaſt as to outward Appearance) who are almoſt always hanging down their Heads, and complaining of abundant Sinfulneſs. And ſure, Purity cannot be expected in theſe who are ſo far from it by their own Confeſſion; yet the Truth is, that ſuch Purity, as is here below, will either be found to lodge among theſe, or no where. Be not deceived, think not that they who loath, and (as they can) fly from the Unholineſs of the World, are therefore taken with the Conceit of their own Holineſs; but as their perfect Purity of Juſtification is by Chriſt's imputed Righteouſneſs, ſo likewiſe they will know, and do always acknowledge, that their inherent Holineſs is *from above* too, from the ſame Fountain, Jeſus Chriſt. The Wiſdom *from above* is pure, this is their Engagement to Humility, for it excludes Vaunting and Boaſting, and beſides that, it is imperfect, troubled and ſtained with Sin, which is enough to keep them humble. Their daily ſad Experience will not ſuffer them to be ſo miſtaken; their many Faults of Infirmity, cannot but keep them from this preſumptuous Fault. There is a Generation indeed that is *pure in their own Eyes*,

(Prov.

(Prov. xxx. 12) *but they are ſuch as are not waſhen from their Filthineſs.* They that are waſhen, are ſtill bewailing, that they again contract ſo much Defilement. The moſt purified Chriſtians are they that are moſt ſenſible of their Impurity. Therefore I called not this an univerſal Freedom from Pollution, but an univerſal Deteſtation of it: They that are thus pure are daily defiled with many Sins, but they cannot be in Love with any Sin at all, nor do they willingly diſpenſe with the ſmalleſt Sins, which a natural Man either ſees not to be Sin (tho' his dim Moon-light diſcover groſſer Evils) or if he do ſee them, yet he judges it too much Niceneſs to chuſe a great Inconvenience rather than a little Sin. Again they differ in another particular, a natural Man may be ſo far in Love with Virtue after his Manner, as to diſlike his own Faults and reſolve to amend them, but yet he would think it a great Weakneſs to ſit down and mourn for Sin, *and to afflict his Soul*, as the Scripture ſpeaks. The Chriſtian's Repentance goes not ſo lightly, there is a great deal more Work in it, 2 *Cor.* vii. 11. There is not only Indignation againſt Impurity, but it proceeds to Revenge. The Saints, we read of in Scripture, were aſhamed of their Impurity, but never of their Tears for it. Let the World enjoy their own Thoughts and account it Folly; yet ſure the Chriſtian, that delights in Purity, ſeeing he cannot be free from daily Sin, when he retires himſelf at Night, is then beſt contented when his Eyes ſerve him moſt plentifully to weep out the Stains of the by-paſt Day; yet he knows withal, that it is only his Redeemer's Blood that takes away the Guilt of them. This is the Condition of thoſe that are truly, tho' not yet fully cleanſed from the Pollutions of the World by the Spirit of Wiſdom and Purity. What mean they then, that would argue themſelves out of this Number, becauſe they find

yet

yet much Droſs left, and that they are not ſo defecated and refined as they would wiſh to be? On the contrary, this Hatred of Pollution teſtifies ſtrongly that the contrary of it, *Purity*, is there; and tho' its Beginnings be ſmall, doubt not, it ſhall in the End be victorious; the ſmoaking of this Flax ſhews indeed that there is groſs Matter there, but it witneſſeth likewiſe that there is Fire in it too; and tho' it be little, we have Chriſt's own Word for it, that it ſhall not be quenched; and if he favour it, no other *Power* ſhall be able to quench it. You find not indeed abſolute Holineſs in your Perſons, nor in your beſt Performances, yet if you breathe and follow after it, if the Pulſe of the Heart beat thus, if the main Current of your Affection be towards Purity, if Sin be in you as your Diſeaſe and greateſt Grief, and not as your Delight, then take Courage you are as pure as Travellers can be; and notwithſtanding that impure Spirit, *Satan*, and the Impurity of your own Spirits vex you daily with Temptations, and often foil you, yet in deſpite of them all, you ſhall arrive ſafe at home where Perfection dwells.

Wiſdom from above is pure] Be aſhamed then of your extream Folly, you that take Pleaſure in any kind of Uncleanneſs, eſpecially ſeeing God hath reformed and purged his Houſe amongſt us: You that are, or ſhould be his living Temples, remain not unreformed; if you do, Church-Reformation will be ſo far from profiting you, that, as a clearer Light, it will but ſerve to make your Impurity both more viſible and more inexcuſable. If you mean that the Holy Ghoſt ſhould dwell with you, entertain him, avoiding both ſpiritual and fleſhly Pollutions. The Word here uſed doth more particularly ſignify *Chaſtity*; and certainly wherever this Wiſdom from above is, this comely Grace is one of her Attendants. Whatever any have been in times paſt, let all be perſwaded

ſwaded henceforth to mortify all luſtful and carnal Affections; know that there is more true and laſting Pleaſure in the Contempt of unlawful Pleaſures, than in the Enjoyment of them. Grieve not then the good Spirit of God with Actions or Speeches, yea or with Thoughts, that are impure. The unholy Soul, like the myſtical *Babylon*, *Apoc.* xiii. makes itſelf a Cage of unclean Birds, and an Habitation of filthy Spirits; and if it continues to be ſuch, it muſt, when it diſlodges, take up its Habitation with curſed Spirits for ever in utter Darkneſs. But as for thoſe that are ſincerely and affectionately pure, that is, pure in Heart, our Saviour hath pronounced their begun Happineſs, *Bleſſed are they that are pure in Heart*; and aſſured them of full Happineſs, *for they ſhall ſee God.* This Wiſdom is ſent from Heaven on purpoſe to guide the Elect thither by the Way of Purity. And mark how well their Reward is ſuited to their Labour, their frequent contemplating and beholding of God's Purity as they could, while they were on their Journey, and their labouring to be like him, ſhall bring them to ſit down in Glory, and to be for ever the pure Beholders of that pureſt Object, *They ſhall ſee God.* What this is we cannot tell you, nor can you conceive it: But walk Heavenwards in Purity, and long to be there, where you ſhall know what it means; *for you ſhall ſee him as he is.*

Now to that bleſſed Trinity be Praiſe for ever.

SER-

SERMON II.

PREFACE.

I *Will return to my Place* (ſaith the Lord by his Prophet) *till they acknowledge their Offence, and ſeek my Face. In their Affliction they will ſeek me early.* Hoſ. v. 15. The Father of Mercies hides himſelf from his Children, not to loſe them, but that they may ſeek him, and may learn, having found him, to keep cloſer by him than formerly. He threatens them, to keep them from Puniſhment: If his Threatning work Submiſſion, it is well; if not, he puniſhes them gently, to ſave them from Deſtruction. He ſeeks no more, but that they acknowledge their Offence, and ſeek his Face. Wonderful Clemency! For who can forbear to confeſs Multitudes of Offences that know themſelves? And who can chuſe but ſeek thy Face, that ever ſaw thy Face, and that know thee? *In their Affliction they will ſeek me early.* He that prays not till Affliction comes and forces him to it, is very ſlothful; but he that prays not in Affliction, is altogether ſenſeleſs. Certainly they that at this Time are not more than ordinary fervent in Prayer, or do not at leaſt deſire and ſtrive to be ſo, cannot well think that there is any ſpiritual Life within them. Sure it is high Time to ſtir up ourſelves to Prayers and Tears. All may bear Arms in that kind of Service. Weak Women may be ſtrong in Prayer; and thoſe Tears, wherein they uſually abound upon other Occaſions, cannot be ſo well ſpent as this way. Let them not run out in Howlings and Impatience, but bring them, by bewailing Sins, private as well as publick, to

quench this publick Fire. And ye Men, yea, ye Men of Courage, account it no Diſparagement thus to weep. We read often of *David*'s Tears, which was no Stain to his Valour. That Cloud that hangs over us, which the frequent Vapours of our Sins have made, except it diſſolve and fall down again in theſe ſweet Showers of godly Tears, is certainly reſerved to be the Matter of a dreadful Storm. Be inſtant every one in ſecret for the averting of this Wrath, and let us now again unite the Cries of our Hearts for this Purpoſe to our compaſſionate God, in the Name and Mediation of his Son the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Job XXXIV. 31, 32.

Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born Chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more.
That which I ſee not, teach thou me: If I have done Iniquity, I will do no more.

THE great Sin, and the great Miſery of Man is, the forgetting of God, and the great End and Uſe of his Works and of his Word is, to teach us the right Remembrance and Conſideration of Him, in all Eſtates. Theſe Words do particularly inſtruct us in the Application of our Thoughts towards him in the time of Affliction. The Shortneſs and the various Signification of the Words uſed in the Original, gives occaſion to ſome other Readings, and another Senſe of them. But this we have in our Tranſlation, being not only very profitable, but very congruous, both to the Words of the primitive Text, and to the Contexture of the Diſcourſe; I ſhall keep to it, without dividing your Thoughts by the mentioning of any other. Neither will I lead you ſo far about, as to ſpeak of the great Diſpute of this Book, and the Queſtion about which it is held. He that ſpeaks here, though the youngeſt of the Company, yet, as

a wiſe and calm ſpirited Man, cloſes all with a Diſcourſe of excellent Temper, and full of grave uſeful Inſtructions, amongſt which this is one,

Surely it is meet to be ſaid, or ſpoke, to God] This ſpeaking to God, though it may be vocal, yet it is not neceſſarily nor chiefly ſo, but is always mainly, and may often be, only mental; without this, the Words of the Mouth, how well choſen, and well expreſt ſoever they be, are to God of no Account or Signification at all. But if the Heart ſpeak, even when there is not a Word in the Mouth, it is that he hearkens to, and regards that Speech, though made by a Voice that none hears but He, and is a Language that none underſtands but He.

But it is a rare unfrequented thing, this Communing of the Heart with God, ſpeaking its Thoughts to him concerning itſelf, and concerning him, and his dealing with it, and the Purpoſes and Intentions it hath towards him; which is the Speech here recommended, and is that divine Exerciſe of Meditation, and Soliloquy of the Soul with itſelf, and with God, hearkening what the Lord God ſpeaks to us, within us, and our Hearts ecchoing and reſounding his Words, as *Pſ.* xxvii. 8, 9. and opening to him our Thoughts of them, and of our ſelves. Though they ſtand open, and he ſees them all, even when we tell him not of them, yet becauſe he loves us, he loves to hear them of our own ſpeaking; *let me hear thy Voice, for it is ſweet:* As a Father delights in the little ſtammering liſping Language of his beloved Child. And if the reflex Affection of Children be in us, we will love alſo to ſpeak with our Father, and to tell him all our Mind (παῤῥησία) and to be often with him in the Entertainments of our ſecret Thoughts.

But the moſt of Men are little within; either they wear out their Hours in vain Diſcourſe with others,

or poſſibly vainer Diſcourſes with themſelves; even thoſe that are not of the worſt ſort, and poſſibly that have their Times of ſecret Prayer, yet do not ſo delight to think of God and to ſpeak with him, as they do to be converſant in other Affairs, and Companies, and Diſcouries, in which there is a great deal of Froth and Emptineſs. Men think, by talking of many things, to be refreſh'd, and yet when they have done, find that it is nothing; and that they had much better have been alone, or have ſaid nothing. Our Thoughts and Speeches in moſt things run to waſte, yea are defiled, as Water ſpilt on the Ground, is both loſt, cannot be gathered up again, and it is polluted, mingled with Duſt. But no Word ſpoke to God, from the ſerious Senſe of a holy Heart, is loſt; he receives it, and returns it into our Boſom with Advantage: A Soul that delights to ſpeak to him, will find that he alſo delights to ſpeak to it. And this Communication certainly is the ſweeteſt and happieſt Choice, to ſpeak little with Men, and much with God. One ſhort Word, ſuch as this here, ſpoke to God, in a darted Thought, eaſes the Heart more when it is afflicted, than the largeſt Diſcourſes and Complainings to the greateſt and powerfuleſt of Men, or the kindeſt and moſt friendly. It gives not only Eaſe but Joy, to ſay to God, *I have ſinned, yet I am thine*; or as here, *I have born Chaſtiſement, I will no more offend.* The Time of Affliction is peculiarly a Time of ſpeaking to God, and ſuch Speech as this is peculiarly befitting ſuch a Time. And this is one great Recommendation of Affliction, that it is a Time of wiſer and more ſober Thoughts; a Time of the returning of the Mind inwards and upwards. A High Place, Fulneſs and Pleaſure draws the Mind more outwards; great Light and white Colours diſgregate the Sight of the Eye, and the very Thoughts of the Mind too. And Men find that the Night is

a fitter Seaſon for deep Thoughts. *It is better*, ſays *Solomon*, *to go to the Houſe of Mourning than to the Houſe of Feaſting:* Thoſe Blacks made the Mind more ſerious. Βαθύτερα γυκλὸς φρένες. 'Tis a rare thing to find much Retirement unto God, much Humility and Brokenneſs of Spirit, true Purity and Spiritualneſs of Heart in the Affluences and great Proſperities of the World. 'Tis no eaſy thing to carry a very full Cup even, and to digeſt well the Fatneſs of a great Eſtate, and great Place. They are not to be envied that have them; even though they be of the better ſort of Men, it is a thouſand to one but that they ſhall be Loſers by the Gains and Advancements of this World; ſuffering proportionably great Abatements of their beſt Advantages, by their Proſperity. The Generality of Men, while they are at Eaſe, do ſecurely neglect God, and little mind either to ſpeak to him, or to hear him ſpeak to them. God complains thus of his own People, *I ſpoke to them in their Proſperity, and they would not hear.* The Noiſes of Coach-wheels, of their Pleaſures, and of their great Affairs, ſo fill their Ears, that the *ſtill Voice*, wherein God is, cannot be heard; *I will bring her into the Wilderneſs, and there I will ſpeak to her Heart*, ſays God of his Church. There the Heart is more at Quiet to hear God, and to ſpeak to him, and is diſpoſed to ſpeak in the Stile here preſcribed, humbly and repentingly.

I have born Chaſtiſement] The ſpeaking thus unto God under Affliction ſignifies, That our Affliction is from his Hand, and to the Acknowledgment of this Truth, the very natural Conſciences of Men do incline them. Tho' Trouble be the general Lot of Mankind, yet it doth not come on him by an improvidential Fatality, *Tho' Man is born to Trouble as the Sparks fly upwards*, Job v. *Yet it comes not out of the Duſt.* It is no leſs true, and in itſelf no leſs clear, that

that all the good we enjoy, and all the evil we ſuffer comes from the ſame Hand; but we are naturally more ſenſible of evil than of good, and therefore do more readily reflect upon the Original and Cauſes of it. Our Diſtreſſes lead us unto the notice of the righteous God inflicting them, and our own unrighteous Ways procuring them, and provoking him ſo to do, and therefore it is meet to ſpeak in this ſubmiſſive humble Language to him. It is by all Means neceſſary to *ſpeak* to him, he is the Party we have to deal withal, or to ſpeak to, even in thoſe Afflictions, whereof Men are the intervenient viſible Cauſes. *Heb.* xii. 6. They are indeed but inſtrumental Cauſes, the *Rod and Staff* in his Hand that ſmites us; therefore our Buſineſs is with him, in whoſe ſupream Hand alone the Mitigations and Increaſes, the Continuance, and the Ending of our Troubles ly. *Who gave* Jacob *to the Spoil and* Iſrael *to the Robbers? Did not the Lord againſt whom we have ſinned?* So *Lam.* i. 14. *The Yoke of my Tranſgreſſions is bound on by his Hand.* Therefore it is altogether neceſſary in all Afflictions to *ſpeak* to him. And as it is neceſſary to ſpeak to him, it is meet to ſpeak thus to him, *I have born Chaſtiſement, I will no more offend.* Theſe Words have in them the true Compoſure of real Repentance, *humble Submiſſion*, and *holy Reſolution. I have born Chaſtiſement*, that is, "I have juſt-"ly born it, and do heartily ſubmit to it: I bear "it juſtly, and take it well: Lord I acquit thee, and "accuſe myſelf." This Language becomes the innocenteſt Perſon in the World in their Suffering. *Job* knew it well, and did often acknowledge it in his preceeding Speeches. Tho' ſometimes, in the heat of Diſpute, and Oppoſure to the uncharitable, and unjuſt Imputations of his Friends, he ſeems to overſtrain the Aſſertion of his own Integrity, (which *Elihu* here corrects) you know he cries out, *I have*

ſinned

ſinned againſt thee, what ſhall I do unto thee, O thou Preſerver of Man? Job vii. And *Chap.* ix. *If I waſh myſelf with Snow-water, and make my Hands never ſo clean, yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the Ditch, and mine own Cloaths ſhall abhor me.*

Vain fooliſh Perſons fret, and foam at the Miſcarriage of a Cauſe they apprehend to be righteous, but this is a great Vanity and inconſiderate Temerity in not obſerving, the great and apparent Unrighteouſneſs in the Perſons managing it. But tho' both the Cauſe and the Perſons were juſt to the greateſt Height imaginable amongſt Men, yet ſtill were it meet to ſpeak thus unto God in the loweſt Acknowledgments and Confeſſions, *that Righteouſneſs belongs unto him, and unto us Shame and Confuſion of Face*, ſo ſays the Church, *Lam.* iii. *The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled againſt his Commandments.* Tho' Affliction is not always deſignedly intended as the Chaſtiſement of ſome particular Sin, yet where Sin is (and that is the Caſe of all the Sons of *Adam*) Affliction coming in, may ſafely be conſidered in its natural Cognation and Alliance with Sin, and ſo preſs forth humble Confeſſions of Sin and Reſolutions againſt it. And thus in *Lev.* xxvi. 41. *They ſhall accept of the Puniſhment of their Iniquity*, ſhall take it humbly and penitently, and kiſs the Rod.

Oh! that there were ſuch a Heart in us! that, inſtead of empty Words that ſcatter themſelves in the Wind, our many vain Diſcourſes we hold one with another concerning our paſt and preſent Sufferings, and further Fears, and diſputing of many fruitleſs and endleſs Queſtions, we were more abundantly turning our Speech this Way, in unto God, and ſaying, " We deſire to give thee Glory, and take " Shame to ourſelves, and to bear our Chaſtiſement, " and to offend no more, to return each from his " evil Way, and to gain this by the Furnace, the

" purging

" purging away of our Droſs, our many and great " Iniquities, our Oaths, and Curſings, and Lying, " our Deceit, and Oppreſſions, and Pride, and Co- " vetouſneſs, our baſe Love of our ſelves, and ha- " ting one another; that we may be delivered from " the Tyranny of our own Luſts and Paſſions, and in " other things *Let the Lord do with us as ſeems good* " *in his Eyes.*" Speaking to God in *Ephraim's* Words, *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19, 20. Words not unlike theſe, would ſtir his Bowels, as there; as it is ſaid, that one String perfectly tuned to another, being touched, the other ſtirs of itſelf. When a ſtubborn Child leaves ſtruggling under the Rod, and turns to intreating, the Father then leaves ſtriking; nothing overcomes him but that. When a Man ſays unto God, " Father I have provoked thee to this, " but pardon, and through thy Grace I will do ſo " no more," then the Rod is thrown aſide, and the Father of Mercies, and his humbled Child, fall to mutual Tenderneſs and Embraces.

What I ſee not, teach thou me, &c] The great Article of Converſion is the Diſengagement of the Heart from the Love of Sin. In that Poſture, as it actually forſakes whatſoever it perceives to be amiſs, ſo it ſtands in an abſolute Readineſs to return to every Duty that yet lies hidden, upon the firſt Diſcovery; that is here the genuine Voice of a repentant Sinner, *What I ſee not, teach thou me,* &c.

This is a very neceſſary Suit, even for the moſt diſcerning, and cleareſt ſighted Penitent, both in reference to the Commandment and Rule for diſcovering the general Nature, and ſeveral Kinds of Sin; and withal for the Application of this general Light, to the Examen of a Man's own Heart, and Ways, that ſo he may have a more exact and particular Account of his own Sins.

The former is the Knowledge of the Laws of God,

God, and Rule by which a Man is to try and to judge himſelf. The moſt knowing are not above the Need of this Requeſt, yea, I am perſwaded, the moſt knowing know beſt how much they need it, and are moſt humbled in themſelves in the Conſcience of their Ignorance and Darkneſs in divine Things, and are moſt earneſt, and preſſing in this daily Supplication, for Increaſes of Light and ſpiritual Knowledge from him who is the Fountain of it, *What I ſee not, teach thou me.* On the other Side, the leaſt knowing, are often the moſt confident that they know all, and ſwelled with a conceited Sufficiency of their Model, and Determination of all things, both dogmatical and practical. And therefore are the moſt imperious and magiſterial in their Concluſions, and the moſt impatient of Contradiction, or even of the moſt modeſt Diſſent.

The wiſeſt, and holieſt Perſons, ſpeak always, in the humbleſt and moſt depreſſing Stile of their own Knowledge, and that not with an Affectation of Modeſty; but in the real Senſe of the thing as it is, and the ſincere Account they give of it, and that commonly when they are declaring themſelves moſt ſolemnly, as in the Sight of God, or ſpeaking in Supplication to him with whom they dare leaſt of all diſſemble. Whoſoever he was that ſpake theſe Words, *Prov.* xxx. ſure he was a Man of eminent Wiſdom and Piety, and yet begins thus, *Surely I am more brutiſh than any Man, and have not the Underſtanding of a Man, I have neither learned Wiſdom, nor have I the Knowledge of the Holy.* And tho' he was ſo diligent a Student, and ſo great a Proficient in the Law of God, yet how importunate a Petitioner is he, for the underſtanding of it, as if he knew nothing at all? Beſides the like Expreſſions in other *Pſalms*, in this one *Pſalm*, that being of ſuch Length hath nothing but the breathing forth *Pſal.* cxix.

of his Affection to the Word and Law of God, how often doth he in it reiterate that, *Teach me thy Statutes:* So often, that a *carnal* Mind is tempted to grow weary of it, as a nauſeating Tautology; but he made it ſtill new, with the Freſhneſs and Vehemency of his Affection. *Make me to underſtand the Way of thy Precepts; give me Underſtanding, and I ſhall keep thy Law.* And *open thou mine Eyes, that I may ſee the Wonders of thy Law*; unſeal mine Eyes, as if ſtill vailed and dark. Theſe are the earneſt and nobly ambitious Deſires that daily ſollicite holy Hearts, and ſtir them to ſollicite the Teacher of Hearts, to be admitted more into the Secrets and Receſſes of Divine Knowledge, not to thoſe Abyſſes that God intends ſhould be ſecret ſtill, and from which he hath barred out our Curioſity, as the forbidden Tree of Knowledge, theſe Secrets that belong to himſelf alone, and concern us not to enquire after, and certainly to be *wading in theſe Deeps, is the Way to be drowned in them. The Searcher of Majeſty ſhall be oppreſt with Glory*; yet, there is in Man a perverſe prepoſterous Deſire, to pore upon ſuch things as are on purpoſe hidden that we ſhould not enquire after them, and to ſeek after uſeleſs, empty Speculations of them, which is a Luxury and Intemperance of the Underſtanding, like unto that, and ſpringing from that, which at firſt undid us in the Root. Theſe are Times full of thoſe empty, airy Queſtions, and Notions in which there is no Clearneſs nor Certainty to be attained, and if it were, yet would ſerve to little or no purpoſe, not making the Man that thinks he hath found them out, one jot the better, or holier Man than he was before: *What avails it*, ſays that devout Author, *to diſpute and diſcourſe high concerning the Trinity, and want Humility, and ſo diſpleaſe that Trinity.* The Light and Knowledge ſuited according to the Intendment of this Copy, is of ano-

another Nature, ſuch as purifies the Heart and rectifies the Life. *What I ſee not, teach thou me*, that is, of ſuch things as may ſerve this End. *That if I have done Iniquity I may do it no more.* This is ſound and ſolid Knowledge, ſuch a Light as inflames the Heart with the Love of God, and of the Beauties of Holineſs; and ſtill, as it grows, makes thoſe to grow likewiſe. Such are ſtill, we ſee, *David*'s multiplied Supplications in that *Pſalm*; not to know reſerved and unuſeful things, but *hide not thy Commandments from me. Thy Hands have made me and faſhioned me.* "Now, what is that thy Creature and Workman-"ſhip begs of thee? What is that which will com-"pleat my Being and make me do Honour to "my Maker? This is it, *give me Underſtanding that* "*I may learn thy Commandments.*" You that would be ſucceſsful Supplicants in this Requeſt, wean your Hearts from this Vanity of Deſire, ſuch Knowledge is as the Cypreſs-Trees, fair and tall, but fruitleſs and ſapleſs. Apply all you know to the purging out of Sin, and intend all the further Knowledge you deſire, to that ſame End. Seek to be acquainted with higher Rules of Mortification, and Self-denial, and Charity, than yet you have either practiſed, or poſſibly ſo much as thought on; that by theſe, your Affections and Actions may be advanced to greater Degrees of Purity, and Conformity with the Holineſs of God. And for this End, beg of him to teach you, what you ſee not in the Exactneſs of the Law and Rule; and withal, which is the other thing in this Word, that, what you ſee not in the Application of it and Search of yourſelf, he would likewiſe ſhew you; for in that, we are commonly as undiſcerning and dim-ſighted as in the other, even where Men have ſome Notion of the Rule and their Duty; yet they perceive not their own, even their groſs Receſſions and Declinings from

it. Love is a blinding thing, and above all Love Self-love; and every Man is naturally his own Flatterer, he deals not faithfully and ſincerely with himſelf in the Search of his own Evils. Now this we are to intreat of God, to be led into ourſelves, and to be applied to the Work of Self-ſearching, by his own Hand, not only to have a right Apprehenſion of the Law given us, but a true Sight of ourſelves. Oh! how many hidden undiſcerned, yea unſuſpected Impurities and Follies are there in the Hearts of thoſe that are the moſt diligent in this Enquiry, much more in the greater Part, even of ſuch as cannot abſolutely be denied the Name of good Men? Some honeſt Intentions and good Deſires there are in them; but they are ſlothful, and unwilling to go to this painful Buſineſs of trying and judging themſelves, and when they ſet to it, many ſecret Corners, and in thoſe many latent Inordinacies do eſcape their Search. *Cleanſe me from ſecret Faults*, ſays *David*, that is, not only thoſe hidden from Men, but even from myſelf, as is clearly his Meaning, by the Words preceeding, *Who knows the Errors of his Life.* Therefore is it neceſſary that we deſire Light of God, *The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*, ſays *Solomon*, *ſearching the innermoſt Parts of the Belly*; but it is a Candle unlighted, when he does not illuminate it for that Search. Oh! what a deal of Vanity and Love of this World, Envy and ſecret Pride lurks in many of our Hearts, that we do not at all perceive, till God cauſeth us to ſee it, leading us in, as he did the Prophet in the Viſion, to ſee the Idolatry of the *Jews* in his very Temple, by which they had provoked him to forſake it, and go far from his Sanctuary; and having diſcovered one Parcel, leads him in further, and makes him enter through the Wall, and adds often, *Son of Man haſt thou ſeen theſe, I will cauſe thee ſee yet more Abominations, and*

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yet more Abominations. Thus is it within many of us that ſhould be his Temples, but we have a Multitude of Images of Jealouſy, one lying hid behind another, till he thus diſcover them to us. Oh! what need have we to intreat him thus, *What I ſee not, teach thou me!*

Now in both theſe, both in the Knowledge of our Rule, and of ourſelves, though there may be ſome uſeful Subſerviency of the Miniſtry of Men, yet the great Teacher of the true Knowledge of his Law, and of himſelf, and of ourſelves, is God. Men may ſpeak to the Ear, but his Chair is in Heaven that teaches Hearts, *cathedram habet in cœlo.* Matchleſs Teacher! that teacheth more in one Hour than Men can do in a whole Age! that can cure the invincible Unteachableneſs of the dulleſt Heart, *gives Underſtanding to the ſimple, and opens the Eyes of the blind.* So then would we be made wiſe, wiſe for Eternity, learned in real living Divinity, let us ſit down at his Feet and make this our continual Requeſt, *What I ſee not, teach thou me.*

And if I have done, &c.] That is, "Any Iniquity "that I yet know not of, any hidden Sin, let me but "once ſee it, and, I hope, thou ſhalt ſee it no more "within me; not willingly lodged and entertained." This ſpeaks an entire total giving up all Sin, and proclaiming utter Defiance and Enmity againſt it; caſting out what is already found out without Delay, and reſolving that ſtill in further Search, as it ſhall be more diſcovered, it ſhall be forthwith diſlodged, without a Thought of ſparing or partial Indulgence to any thing that is Sin, or like it, or may any way befriend it, or be an Occaſion and Incentive of it. This is that abſolute renouncing of Sin, and Surrender of the whole Soul and our whole ſelves to God, which whoſoever do not heartily conſent to and reſolve on, their Religion is in vain, and (which

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is here the Point) their Affliction is in vain: Whatſoever they have ſuffered, they have gained nothing by all their Sufferings, if their Hearts remain ſtill ſelf-will'd, ſtubborn, untamed, and unpliable to God. And this makes their Miſeries out of meaſure miſerable, and their Sins out of meaſure ſinful; whereas were it thus qualify'd, and had it any Operation this way towards the ſubjecting of their Hearts unto God, Affliction were not to be called Miſery, but would go under the Title of a Bleſſedneſs: *Bleſſed is the Man whom thou correcteſt and teacheſt him out of thy Law.* That ſuiting with this here deſired, *I have born Chaſtiſement: What I ſee not, teach thou me; and if I have done Iniquity, I will do it no more.* Oh! were it thus with us, my Brethren, how might we rejoice, and inſert into our Praiſes all that is come upon us, if it had wrought or advanced any thing of this kind within us, this bleſſed Compliance with the Will of God, not entertaining any thing knowingly that diſpleaſes him; finding a Pleaſure in the Denial and Deſtruction of our own moſt beloved Pleaſures at his Appointment and for his ſake, whatſoever is in us, and deareſt to us, that would offend us, that would draw us to offend him, *were it the right Hand, let it be cut off, or the right Eye, let it be plucked out:* Or, to make ſhorter Work, let the whole Man die at once crucified with Jeſus, *That we may be henceforth dead to Sin, dead to the World, dead to ourſelves, and alive only to God.*

SER-

SERMON III.

PREFACE.

THere is no Exerciſe ſo delightful to thoſe that are truly godly, as the ſolemn Worſhip of God, if they find his powerful and ſenſible Preſence in it; and indeed there is nothing on Earth more like to Heaven than that is. But when he withdraws himſelf, and with-holds the Influence and Breathings of his Spirit in his Service, then good Souls find nothing more lifeleſs and uncomfortable: But there is this Difference, even at ſuch a time betwixt them, and thoſe that have no ſpiritual Life in them at all, that they find, and are ſenſible of this Difference; whereas the other know not what it means. And for the moſt part, the greateſt Number of thoſe that meet together with a Profeſſion to worſhip God, yet are ſuch as do not underſtand this Difference. Cuſtom and Formality draws many to the ordinary Places of publick Worſhip, and fills too much of the room; and ſometimes Novelty and Curioſity, to Places not ordinary, has a large Share: But how few are there that come on purpoſe to meet with God in his Worſhip, and to find his Power in ſtrengthening their weak Faith, and weakening their ſtrong Corruptions; affording them Proviſion of ſpiritual Strength and Comfort againſt Times of Trial; and, in a Word, advancing them ſome Steps forward in their Journey towards Heaven, where Happineſs and Perfection dwells? Certainly theſe ſweet Effects are to be found in theſe Ordinances, if we would look after them. Let it grieve us then, that we have ſo often loſt our Labour in the Worſhip of God, through

through our own Neglect, and intreat the Lord, that at this Time he would not ſend us away empty; for how weak ſoever the Means be, if he put his Strength, the Work ſhall be done, in ſome meaſure, to his Glory, and our Edification. Now that he may be pleaſed to do ſo, to leave a Bleſſing behind him, let us pray, &c.

ISAIAH XXVIII. 5, 6.

In that Day ſhall the Lord of Hoſts be for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty unto the Reſidue of his People:

And for a Spirit of Judgment to him that ſitteth in Judgment, and for Strength to them that turn the Battle to the Gate.

ALL the Works of Divine Providence are full of Wiſdom and Juſtice, even every one ſeverally conſidered; yet we obſerve them beſt to be ſuch, when we take notice of their Order, and mutual Aſpect one to another, whether in the Succeſſion of Times, or ſuch Paſſages as are cotemporary and fall in together at one and the ſame Time. As, when the Lord brings notable Judgments upon the proud Workers of Iniquity, and at the ſame Time confers ſpecial Mercies on his own People; who is there that may not perceive Juſtice and Mercy illuſtrating and beautifying one another? It is true, the full Reward and perfect Reſt of the Godly is not here below; they would be ſorry if it were: Nor is this the Place of plenary Puniſhment for the Ungodly. Men may look for a Judgment too, yet the Lord is pleaſed at ſome times to give ſome Reſemblances and Pledges, as it were, of that great and laſt Judgment in remarkable Paſſages of Juſtice and Mercy, at one and the ſame Time; and ſuch a Time it is that the Prophet foretells in this his Sermon, which concerns the

the two Siſter Kingdoms of *Iſrael* and *Judah*. Having denounced a heavy Calamity to come upon *Iſrael*, under the Name of *Ephraim*, he comforts thoſe of *Judah*, under the Name of *the Reſidue of his People*. They not being ſo groſly corrupted as the other were, he ſtays them with this Promiſe: *In that Day*, ſaith he, when the other ſhall be overwhelmed, as with a Deluge, *the Lord of Hoſts ſhall be for a Crown of Glory, and for a Diadem of Beauty unto the Reſidue of his People.*

The Promiſe is made up of three Benefits, yet the three are but one; or rather, one is all the three to them. *The Lord of Hoſts*; it is He that ſhall be their *Honour, Wiſdom* and *Strength. He ſhall be a Crown*, &c. But firſt, a Word of the Circumſtance of Time, *In that Day.*

That Sovereign Lord, who at firſt ſet up the Lights of Heaven to diſtinguiſh Times and Seaſons, by their conſtant Motion, and likewiſe, by his ſupreme Providence ruling the World, hath fixed the Periods of States and Kingdoms, and decreed their Revolutions, their Riſing, Aſcending, and their Height, with their Decline and Setting, hath by a ſpecial Providence determined thoſe Changes and Viciſſitudes that befal his Church. That which the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, in his own Particular, *Pſal.* xxxi. 15. holds of each Believer, and of the Church, which they make up in all Ages and Places: *I ſaid, thou art my God, my Times are in thy Hand*; a ſure and ſteady Hand indeed, and therefore he builds his Confidence upon it, *ver.* 13, *They took Counſel againſt me, but I truſted in thee.* And upon this, he prays in Faith, That the Face of God may ſhine upon him, and the Wicked may be aſhamed.

Thus then, as many as are looking after a Day of Mercy to the Church of God, pray and believe upon this Ground, That the Time of it is neither in the

frail Hands of thoſe that favour and ſeek it, nor in the Hands of thoſe that oppoſe it, how ſtrong and ſubtile ſoever they be, but in that Almighty Hand, that doth in Heaven and Earth what pleaſeth him. If he have ſaid, *now*, and *here*, will I give a Day of Refreſhment to my People that have long groaned for it, a Day of the Purity and Power of Religion; if, I ſay, this be his Purpoſe, they muſt have ſomewhat more than Omnipotence that can hinder it. When his appointed Time comes, to make a Day of Deliverance dawn upon his Church, after their long Night, either of Affliction or of Defection, or both; they that contrive againſt that Day-ſpring, are as vain as if they would ſit down to plot how to hinder the Sun from riſing in the Morning. And they that let go their Hopes of it, becauſe of great apparent Difficulties that interpoſe betwixt their Eye and the Accompliſhment of that Work, they are as weak as if they ſhould imagine, when Miſts and thick Vapours appear about the Horizon in the Morning, that theſe could hinder the riſing of the Sun, which is ſo far out of their Reach, and *comes forth as a Bridegroom, and rejoices as a mighty Man to run his Race*, ſays *David*. Thoſe Miſts may indeed hinder his clear Appearance, and keep it from the Eye for a Time; but Reaſon tells us, even then, that they cannot ſtop his Courſe. And Faith aſſures us no leſs in the other, That no Difficulties can hold back God's Day, and Work of Mercy, to his People. But you'll ſay, "All the Difficulty is to know, whether "the appointed Time be near or not." 'Tis true, we have no particular Prophecies to aſſure us; but certainly when God *awakes* his Children and makes them *riſe*, this is a probable Sign that it is near Day. I mean, when he ſtirs them up to more than uſual Hopes, and Prayers, and Endeavours, it is very likely that he intends them ſome ſpecial Good; but yet,

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more, when he himſelf is *ariſen*, (as it pleaſeth him to ſpeak) that is, when he is begun to appear, in a more than ordinary Manner, of working by ſingular and wonderful Footſteps of Providence. This is, no doubt, a Sign that he will go on to ſhew remarkable Mercy to *Sion*, and that *the Time to favour her, yea, the ſet Time is come*, Pſ. cii. 13.

Howſoever then, let the wonderful Workings of the Lord move thoſe of you, that have any Power and Opportunity, to be now (if ever) active, for the greateſt good, both of the preſent Age and of Poſterity. And you that can be no other way uſeful, yet you ſhall be no ſmall Helpers if you be much in Prayer; let both your Hopes and your Fears ſerve to ſharpen your Prayers. Be not too much dejected with any Diſcouragement, neither be ye carnally lift up with outward Appearances; *for the Heart of him that is lifted up is not upright in him*, Hab. ii. 4. But *live, as the juſt do, by your Faith:* And if the deferring of your Hopes ſhould *ſicken your Hearts*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks, yet ſtay and comfort them with the Cordial of the Promiſes. This you are ſure of, you have God's own Word engaged for it, that in thoſe latter Days *Babylon* ſhall be brought to the Duſt, and the true Church of Chriſt ſhall flouriſh and increaſe: *And this Viſion is for an appointed Time*, (as *Hab.* ſays of his) *at the End it ſhall ſpeak, and not lie; though it tarry, wait for it, it will ſurely come, it will not tarry*, Hab. ii. 3.

In that Day] In the Day of *Ephraim*'s or *Iſrael*'s Calamity, denounced in the former Verſes; which, as moſt do conceive, was when the *Aſſyrian* oppreſſed, them and in the end led them captive, in the Reign of *Hoſea*, as you have the Hiſtory of it, 2 *Kings* xvii. At which time *Hezekiah* was King of *Judah*, as you find in the following Chapter: And in *that notable Reformation* wrought by him, with thoſe Bleſſings

that followed upon it, is found the Accompliſhment of this Promiſe to *Judah*, *In that Day*, &c. The Parallel of God's different dealing with theſe two Kingdoms, at the Time there ſpecified, *(in that Day)* does afford divers Leſſons, which might be here not impertinently taken notice of. Only this,

Tho' *Judah* alſo had its own Corruptions when *Hezekiah* came to the Crown, yet it pleaſed the Lord to ſpare them, and work a peaceable Reformation, making *Iſrael*'s Puniſhment their Warning. Truly that Nation, with whom the Lord deals thus graciouſly, is vilely ingrate if they obſerve it not with much Humility and Thankfulneſs, and with Profit too. If the Lord ſhould anſwer your Deſires and Hopes with a Reformation in a peaceable way, and ſhould yet lengthen out your long continued Peace, and ſhould make this little paſt ſhaking of it cauſe it to take root the faſter: If he ſhould, I ſay, do this, where would ye find fit Praiſes for ſuch a Wonder of Mercy; eſpecially conſidering, that in the mean while he hath made other Reformed Churches Fields of Blood, and made, as it were, the Sound of their Stripes preach Repentance to us? But certainly, if the hearing the Voice of the Rod prevail not, we ſhall feel the Smart of it, as this People of *Judah* did afterwards, becauſe they were not ſo wiſe as to become wiſer and better by *Iſrael*'s Folly and Calamity. We are expecting great Things at our Lord's Hands, and our Provocations and Sins againſt him are great; yet there is none of them all puts us in ſo much Danger of Diſappointment, as Impenitence. Were there more Repentance and perſonal Reformation amongſt us, we might take it as a hopeful Forerunner of that publick Reformation which ſo many ſeem now to deſire.

The Lord of Hoſts] This Stile of his, you know, is frequent in the Prophets, in their Predictions of Mercy

cy and Judgment; intimating both his Greatneſs and Majeſty, and his ſupreme Power, for accompliſhing his Word. No created Power can reſiſt him; yea, all muſt ſerve him. The moſt excellent Creatures can have no greater Honour: The greateſt are not exempted, nor the meaneſt excluded from ſerving him. In *Acts* xii. 23. you find one of the nobleſt Creatures, and a Number of the vileſt, made uſe of at the ſame time in the ſame Service. Becauſe *Herod* did accept of the Sacrilege of the People, and gave not back to this Lord of Hoſts his own Glory, *the Angel of the Lord ſmote him*, and *the Vermine devoured him.* And in *Egypt*, you know, the employing of the deſtroying Angel, and what Variety of Hoſts this Lord of Hoſts did employ to plague them. What Madneſs then is it to oppoſe and encounter this great General; even in doubtful Caſes, to run on blindly, without examining, leſt peradventure a Man ſhould be found a Fighter againſt God? And on the other Side, it is great Weakneſs to admit any Fear under his Banner. If a Man could ſay, when he was told of the Multitude of the Ships the Enemy had, *Againſt how many do ye reckon me?* How much more juſtly may we reckon this Lord of Hoſts, againſt Multitudes of Enemies, how great ſoever? *They are to him as the Drop of a Bucket, and the ſmalleſt Duſt of the Balance.* 'Tis Ignorance and mean Thoughts of this mighty Lord that makes his Enemies ſo confident; and it is the ſame Evil, in ſome Degree, or at the beſt, Forgetfulneſs of his Power, that cauſeth Diffidence in his Followers, *Iſa.* li. 12, 13. Now the ſame Lord of Hoſts, you know, is likewiſe called *the God of Peace*; He is indeed, *& pace & bello inſignis, ſplendid both in Peace and War.* The Bleſſing of Peace and the Succeſs of War are both from him; and to him alone is due the Praiſe of both.

πρὸς ποσοὺς μὲ ἀντιτάττετε;

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Shall be a Crown, &c.] He ſhall dignify and adorn them by his ſpecial Preſence; to wit, in the Purity of his Ordinances and Religion amongſt them; the Profeſſion and Flouriſhing of that ſhall be their ſpecial Glory and Beauty. For as the other two Benefits concern their civil Good, Juſtice flouriſhing within, and Wealth, and Opulency from without, ſo doubtleſs, this firſt, *this Glory* and *Beauty*, is Religion, as the chiefeſt of the three, and the other two are its Attendants. In *Pſ.* xxvi *ver.* 8. the Sanctuary, the Place of their ſolemn Worſhip, is called *the Place where God's Honour dwelleth*, or the Tabernacle of his Honour, and *Pſ.* xcvi. 9. *the glorious Sanctuary*, or *the Beauty of Holineſs*. And the Ark of God, you know, was called *the Glory*. *The Glory is departed from* Iſrael, (ſaid the Wife of *Phineas*) *for the Ark of God is taken*. Pure Religion, and a pure Worſhip, is the Glory of God amongſt his People, and conſequently, *their* Glory. Now referring this Prophecy to *Hezekiah*'s Time, the Accompliſhment of it is evident, in that Work of Reformation, whereof you have the full Hiſtory, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 30, 31, *&c.*

If it be thus, that the Purity of Religion and Worſhip, is the Crown and Glory of a People; and therefore, on the other Side, that their deepeſt Stain of Diſhonour and Vileneſs, is the vitiating of Religion with human Devices; then to contend for the Preſervation or the Reformation of it, is noble and worthy of a Chriſtian. 'Tis for the Crown of Jeſus Chriſt, which is likewiſe a Crown of Glory, and Diadem of Beauty to them, he being their Head. It is indeed, the true Glory both of Kings and their Kingdoms. Labour then for Conſtancy in this Work; let no Man take your Crown from you; you know how buſy the Emiſſaries of the Church of *Rome* have been to take it from us, or, at leaſt,

to

to pick the Diamonds out of it, and put in falſe counterfeit ones in their Places, I mean, they ſtole away the Power of Religion, and filled up the Room with Shadows and Fopperies of their own deviſing. 'Tis the Vanity of that Church, to think they adorn the Worſhip of God when they dreſs it up with Splendor in her Service, which tho' ſome magnify ſo much, yet may moſt truly be called a gliſtering Slavery and Captivity. Then is ſhe truly free and wears her Crown, when the Ordinances of God are conformable to his own Appointment. It is Vanity in Man, I ſay, when they dreſs it up with a multitude of gaudy Ceremonies, and make *it* the ſmalleſt Part of *itſelf*, whereas, indeed, its true Glory conſiſts not in Pomp, but in Purity and Simplicity. *Apoc.* xii. we find the Church, under the Name of a Woman, richly attired indeed, but her Ornaments be all heavenly, *the Sun* her Clothing, and her Crown of *twelve Stars*; needs ſhe then borrow ſublunary Glory? No, ſhe treads upon it, the Moon is under her Feet. There is another Woman, indeed, in that ſame Book, arrayed in Purple and Scarlet, decked with Gold and precious Stones, and having a golden Cup in her Hand, but that golden Cup is full of Abominations and Filthineſs, and ſhe herſelf the Mother of Abominations, *Apoc.* xvii. 4. The natural Man judges according to his Reach, but to a ſpiritual Eye there is a moſt genuine Beauty in the Service of God and Government of his Houſe, and when they are neareſt to the Rule, the Word of God, then is it, that the Lord himſelf is the Crown and Diadem of his Church.

A Crown, &c.] Again we conſider this perſonally, as belonging in particular to every Believer. They are all *made Kings and Prieſts unto God the Father*, Rev. i. 6. *They are a choſen Generation, a Royal Prieſthood*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. how deſpicable ſoever to the

the World. This is their Dignity: *The Lord is their Crown and Diadem*; he ſubdues their Luſt, and makes them Kings over their own Affections, and more than Conquerors over all Troubles and Perſecutions; whereas carnal Men are continually hurried like Slaves, unto baſe Employments, ſtill kept toiling in the ignoble Service of their own Luſts. They think, indeed, it is their Liberty, but that's a Baſeneſs of Spirit, that complies ſo well with ſo vile and ſervile a Condition. And whereas they judge the godly to be the Refuſe and Droſs of the Earth, and the proper Objects of Contempt, this is becauſe this their Crown, though moſt glorious, is inviſible to the Eye of Nature. *The Lord is a Crown:* If they knew what this is, they would ſee enough in it to countervail their outward Meanneſs, and the Reproaches the World caſts on them, as the Apoſtle St. *Peter* hath it, 1 *Ep. cap.* iv. 14. *If ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt, happy are ye, for the Spirit of Glory and of God reſteth on you:* He is their *Crown.*

And obſerve, how this Crown is oppoſed to that blaſted Glory and fading Crown of Pride, ſpoken of in the former Verſes.

Who is there that ſees not, in daily Experience, the Vanity and Inconſtancy of worldly Glory, and yet how few are there that wean themſelves from it, and learn to diſdain it? Still Men dote upon that which is not, upon a Shadow, a Nothing. But would you have a Glory that fadeth not, a Garland that cannot wither, make the Lord your *Crown* and *your Glory*; and if he be ſo, glory in him and in nothing elſe: *Let not the wiſe Man glory*, &c. *but let*, &c. *Jer.* ix. 23.

You that are noble aſpire to this Crown, as being ſo far above your periſhing Honours and bounded Powers: And you that are outwardly meaner and lower, ſee how little Cauſe you have to complain of your

your Condition, ſeeing you are not debarred from this beſt and greateſt Honour. And that you may diſcern it aright what it is, know that it conſiſts in the Renovation of God's Image within you, which is in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs: So the Lord becomes your Crown in the Kingdom of Grace; and by this you may diſcover, whether or no you have attained it. If you can yet delight to wallow in the Puddle and Pleaſures of Sin, you are far from this royal Condition: But if you find your Soul poſſeſſed with the Love of Holineſs, and that you are trampling upon profane Delights, this may perſwade you that God hath enabled you, and crowned you with his Grace, and will crown you with Glory. Again, try it by this; if the Lord is become your Crown and your Glory, you will glory in him, and in nothing elſe. Tho' you be wiſe, you will not glory in your Wiſdom, nor in Strength, nor in Riches, nor Honours, tho' you had them all; but if you glory, you will glory in the Lord. And withal, your higheſt Joy will be to ſee the Advancement of his Glory; and, if you can, to be any way ſerviceable to the advancing of it.

And a Spirit of Judgment, &c.] Both to theſe that ſit in Judgment, and to the People; for Juſtice is the ſtrongeſt Baſe and Eſtabliſhment of Authority. And withal, the Influence of it is moſt ſweet and comfortable to theſe that are under Authority; and where it is wanting, that Order and Relation of Superiors and Inferiors, which God hath appointed in the Societies of Men, for their Good, tends exceedingly to the Damage of both. And therefore, where God intendeth to continue the Peace and Welfare of a People, he is liberal in pouring out much of this Spirit of Judgment on thoſe that ſit in Judgment. On the contrary, it is for a heavy Puniſhment, when he withdraws his Spirit from Rulers, and leaves

them wholly to the Corruption and Vanity of their own Spirits.

That ſit in Judgment] To all that are in Place of Authority and Judicature, from the ſupream to the loweſt Magiſtrate; for this concerns them all, for they be all raiſed in their Subordination, and ſeveral Places above the People, for the Benefit and Good of the People, as the Stars, that be ſet ſo high, yet are placed there to be uſeful and beneficial to the inferior World.

Now this Spirit of Judgment comprehends in it, both due *Wiſdom* and *Prudence*, for the Trial and right judging of Affairs, and for the diſcerning betwixt ſound and perverſe Counſel; and withal a *Judgment practically good*, that cannot be byaſſed from the ſtraight Line of Equity and Juſtice by any ſiniſter Reſpect.

Now ſeeing the Spirit of Judgment is from the Lord, yea, he is this Spirit; it ought to perſwade thoſe that ſit in Judgment, to intreat and pray for this, and to depend upon it, and beware of Self-confidence. *Truſt in the Lord*, ſaith *Solomon*, *and lean not to thine own Underſtanding*; if you do, it will prove but a broken Reed. And as they that ſit in Judgment ſhould intreat his Spirit by Prayer, ſo generally, all muſt ſhare with them in this Duty, and make Supplication for all that are in Authority over them, eſpecially in extraordinary Times. Truly we have Matter of Thankfulneſs, that the Lord hath in ſome Meaſure inclined the royal Heart of our Sovereign to the Deſires of his People, and ought ſtill to pray, that the Lord would give the King his Judgments. And then, as the pſalmiſt adds, *The Mountains ſhall bring Peace to the People, and the little Hills, by Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. lxxii. 3. And for this End, let all that wiſh the publick, yea, their own Good, pray much for Abundance of this Spirit of Judgment

ment to be conferred on them; your Eyes and Expectations are upon them. If you would enjoy the Lamp, you muſt pour in Oil. This Spirit, indeed, you cannot pour upon them, but if you pour out many Prayers, you may draw it from above; he will give it, who here promiſes to be *a Spirit of Judgment.*

And ſtrength] Obſerve, the Way to be powerful and ſucceſsful againſt foreign Enemies is, to have Religion and Juſtice flouriſhing at home. And truly, if it pleaſe our God, to anſwer the Deſires of his People, at this Time, it may ſo unite the Affection and Strength of the two Kingdoms, (the Lord of Hoſts being their Strength) as to make them a Terror to their Enemies, whereas they were become a Scorn and Deriſion to them. For your particular, labour to make the Lord your Glory, to have Chriſt made unto you, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *both Wiſdom, and Righteouſneſs, and Sanctification*, which are the Glory and Beauty of the Soul, *and Redemption* from your ſpiritual Enemies. Draw Strength from him, to fight and prevail againſt them, till after the ſhort Combat of this Life, you obtain the Crown, and dwell in his Preſence, where you ſhall fear no more Aſſaults, neither of Sin nor Affliction, but ſhall be for ever happy in the bleſſed Viſion of his Face. *To him, be Glory*, Amen.

SER-

SERMON IV.

PREFACE.

EXternal Worſhip doth openly acknowledge a Deity, but want of inward Senſe in Worſhip ſecretly denieth it; *The Fool hath ſaid in his Heart, there is no God.* It is ſtrange to hear ſo much Noiſe of Religion in the World, and to find ſo little Piety. To preſent the living God with a Carcaſe of lifeleſs Worſhip, is to pay him with Shells of Services, and ſo to mock him. And it is a more admirable long-ſuffering in him to defer the Puniſhment of ſuch Devotion, than all the other Sins in the World. The *Egyptian* Temples were rich and ſtately *Fabricks.* A Stranger, who had looked upon them without, would have imagined ſome great Deity within; but if they entred (as *Lucian* ſays, laughing at them) nothing was to be ſeen, but only ſome Ape, or Cat, or py'd Bull, or ſome other fine God like thoſe. To behold our fair Semblance of Religion that frequent this Houſe, it would appear that we were all the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt. But whoſo could look within us, would find in many of our Hearts, Luſt, Pride, Avarice, or ſome ſuch like ſecret Vice adored as a God; and theſe are they that, while our Bodies ſit here, do alienate our Souls from the Service of the eternal God. So that we are either altogether ſenſeleſs and dead before him, or if any Fit of ſpiritual Motion riſe within us, we find it here, and here we leave it, as if it were Sacrilege to take it home with us. But did once that Spirit of Grace breathe ſavingly upon our Souls, we ſhould ſtraight renounce and abhor thoſe baſe Idols,

and

and then all the Current of our Affection would run more in this Channel; our Services would then be ſpiritual, and it would be our Heaven upon Earth to view God in his Sanctuary; and the obtaining of the Change is and ſhould be one main End of this our Meeting, and, that it may be the happy Effect of it, our Recourſe muſt be to the Throne of Grace by humble Prayer, *in the Name of our Mediator Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.*

ISAIAH LX. 1.

Ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.

ADmirable is the Worth and Depth of Divine Providence! this either we know not, or at leaſt ſeldom remember; while we forget the Wonders of Providence, we direct our Thoughts to baſer Objects, and think not on it; and while we forget the Depth of Providence (if at any Time we look towards it) we judge raſhly and think amiſs of it. If this be true of that general Providence whereby God rules the World, it is more true of his ſpecial Providence towards his Church. This is both the moſt excellent Piece of it, and therefore beſt worth the reading, and alſo the hardeſt Piece, and therefore it requires Sobriety in judging; above all other things he that ſuddenly judges in this makes haſte to err. To have a right View of it, it muſt be taken altogether, and not by Parcels: Pieces of rareſt Artifice, while they are a making, ſeem little worth, eſpecially to an unskilful Eye, which being compleated, command Admiration. *P. Martyr* ſays well, *De operibus Dei, antequam actum, non eſt judicandum.* There is a Time when the Daughters of *Sion* embrace the Dunghil, and ſit deſolate in the Sreets, as *Jeremiah* hath it in his *Lamentations*, iv. 5. and at that ſame Time

Time the Voice of *Babylon* is, *I ſit as a Queen, and ſhall ſee no Sorrow*, Iſa. xlvii. All is out of Order here. But if we ſtay a while, we ſhall ſee *Sion* and *Babylon* appointed to change Seats, by the great Maſter of the World; *Come down* (ſays he) *Daughter of Babylon, and ſit in the Duſt*, Iſa. xlvii. And here to *Sion*; *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.* It is an entire Cataſtrophe, both Parties find a notable Alteration together, that ſame Hand that exalts the one ruins the other. When the Sun riſes upon the Church, her Antipodes muſt needs be covered with Darkneſs. As we find it in the next Verſe to the Text. *Darkneſs ſhall cover the Earth, and groſs Darkneſs the People, but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his Glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee.*

The Prophet elevated by the Spirit of God to a View of after Ages, as clear as if preſent, ſeems here to find his People ſitting under the dark Mantle of a ſad and tedious Night, and having long expected the Sun's Return in vain, before its Time, they give over Expectation when it is near them, and deſperately ſold themſelves to ly perpetually in the dark. Now the Prophet, as it were ſtanding awake upon ſome Mountain, perceives the Day approaching, and the golden Chariots of the Morning of Deliverance haſting forward, and ſeems to come ſpeedily with theſe glad News, to a captive People, and ſounds this Trumpet in their Ears, *ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come*, &c. The very Manner of Expreſſion is ſudden and rouſing, without a copulative, *not ariſe and ſhine*; *but ariſe, ſhine*, &c.

The Words have in them, a clear Stamp of Relation to a low Poſture and obſcure Condition; they ſuppoſe a People lying or ſitting without Light. Deep Diſtreſs is that dark Soil that beſt ſets off the Luſtre of marvellous Deliverances; and among many other Rea-

Reaſons of the Church's Viciſſitudes, why may not this be one: *The Lord is more illuſtrious in the World by that deep Wiſdom and great Power that ſhines when he raiſes and reſtores her from deſperate Afflictions, than if he had ſtill preſerved her in conſtant Eaſe.* He ſeems ſometimes careleſs of her Condition, and regardleſs of her Groans; but even then, is he *waiting the moſt fit Time to be gracious*, as our Prophet ſpeaks. And when it is time, out of the baſeſt Eſtate he brings her forth more freſh, ſtrong and beautiful than before. *Tho' you have lien among the Pots, ye ſhall be as the Wings of a Dove covered with Silver, and her Feathers with yellow Gold*, Pſal. lxviii. 13. Do with the Church what you will, ſhe ſhall come through, and that with Advantage, *mergas profundo, pulchrior exilit*, as one ſays of *Rome*. Keep the Church ſeventy Years captive, yet after that, *ſhe ſhall ariſe and ſhine more glorious than ever.*

But ſurely the Strain of this evangelick Prophecy riſes higher than any temporal Deliverance. Therefore we muſt riſe to ſome more ſpiritual Senſe of it, not excluding the former. And that which ſome call divers Senſes of the ſame Scripture, is indeed, but divers Parts of one full Senſe. This Prophecy is out of queſtion, a moſt rich Deſcription of the Kingdom of Chriſt under the Goſpel. And in this Senſe, this Invitation to *ariſe* and *ſhine* is mainly addreſt to myſtical *Jeruſalem*, yet not without ſome Privilege to literal *Jeruſalem* beyond other People. They are firſt invited to *ariſe* and *ſhine*, becauſe this Sun aroſe firſt in their *Horizon*. Chriſt came of the *Jews*, and came firſt to them. *The Redeemer ſhall come to* Zion, ſays our Prophet, in the former *Chapter*, but miſerable Jeruſalem *knew not the Day of her Viſitation, nor the Things that concerned her Peace, and therefore are they now hid from her Eyes.* She delighted to deceive herſelf with Fancies of (I know not

not what) imaginary Grandeur, and outward Glory, to which the promiſed Meſſiah ſhould exalt her, and did, in that Kind, particularly, abuſe this very Prophecy; ſo doting upon a Senſe groſly literal, ſhe forfeited the Enjoyment of thoſe ſpiritual Bleſſings that are here deſcribed. But undoubtedly, that People of the *Jews* ſhall once more be commanded to ariſe and ſhine, and their Return ſhall be the Riches of the *Gentiles*; and that ſhall be a more glorious Time than ever the Church of God did yet behold. Nor is there any Inconvenience, if we think that the high Expreſſions of this Prophecy have ſome ſpiritual Reference to that Time, ſince the great Doctor of the *Gentiles* applies ſome Words of the former Chapter to that Purpoſe, *Rom.* xi. 29. They forget a main Point of the Church's Glory, that pray not daily for the *Jews* Converſion.

But to paſs that, and inſiſt on the ſpiritual Senſe of theſe Words, as directed to the whole Church of Chriſt. They contain a powerful Incitement to a twofold Act, inforced (as I conceive) by one Reaſon, under a twofold Expreſſion, neither of them ſuperfluous, but each giving Light to other, and ſuiting very aptly with the two Words of Command: *Ariſe, for the Glory of the Lord is riſen, and ſhine, for thy Light is come.*

I will not now ſubdivide theſe Parts again, and cut them ſmaller, but will rather unite them again into this one Propoſition: *The Coming and Preſence of Chriſt engages all to whom he comes, to ariſe and ſhine.* In this Propoſition, may be conſidered the Nature of the Duties, the Univerſality of the Subject, and the Force of the Reaſon. *Firſt*, the Nature of the Duties, *what it is to ariſe and ſhine.*

Ariſing hath either Reference to a Fall, or to ſome contrary Poſture of ſitting, or lying; or to one of theſe two Conditions, that are ſo like one another,

Sleep,

Sleep, or Death; and to all theſe, ſpiritually underſtood, may it here be referred. This is the Voice of the Goſpel to the Sons of *Adam*, *ariſe*, for in him they all *fell*. The firſt Sin of that firſt Man, was the great Fall of Mankind; it could not but undo us, it was from ſo high a Station. Our daily Sins are our daily Falls, and they are the Fruits of that great one, *Thou haſt fallen by thine Iniquity*, ſays the Lord to his People, *Hoſea* xiv. 1. As for theſe Poſtures of ſitting and lying, the Scripture makes uſe of them both, to ſignify the State of Sin. Says not St. *John*, *The World lies in Wickedneſs*, 1 John v. 19? Are not the People ſaid to *ſit in Darkneſs*, mentioned *Matth.* iv. 16? which is directly oppoſite to *ariſe* and *ſhine*. In the Darkneſs of *Egypt*, it is ſaid, the People *ſat ſtill*, none aroſe from their Places. In the groſs Miſt of corrupt Nature, Man cannot beſtir himſelf to any ſpiritual Action, but when this Light is come, then he may, and ſhould ariſe.

Now for Sleep and Death, Sin is moſt frequently repreſented in holy Writ under their black Vizors. To forbear Places where they are ſeverally ſo uſed, we ſhall find them jointly in one, *Eph.* v. 14. *Ariſe thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead*; which Place ſeems to have ſpecial Alluſion to this very Text.

The impenitent Sinner is as one buried in Sleep; his Soul is in Darkneſs, fit for Sleep, and loves to be ſo. That he may ſleep the ſounder, he ſhuts all the Paſſages of Light, as Enemies to his Reſt; and ſo, by cloſe Windows and Curtains, makes an artificial Night to himſelf within; not a Beam appears there, though without, the clear Day of the Goſpel ſhines round about him. The Senſes of his Soul, as we may call them, are all bound up, and are not exerciſed to *diſcern good and evil*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* v. 14. And his leading Faculty, his Underſtanding, is ſurcharged with ſleepy Vapours, that ariſe

inceſſantly from the inferior Part of his Soul, his perverſe Affections. Nor hath his Mind any other Exerciſe, in this ſleepy Condition, but the vain Buſineſs of dreaming. His moſt refin'd and wiſeſt Thoughts are but mere Extravagancies from Man's due End, and his greateſt Contentments nothing but golden Dreams: Yet he is ſerious in them, and no wonder, for who can diſcern the Folly of his own Dream till he is awake? He that dreams he eateth, when he awakes, finds his Soul empty, and not till then, *Iſa.* xxix. 8. Now while he thus ſleeps, his great Buſineſs lies bye, yet ſpends he his Hand-breadth of Time as faſt, while he is faſt a ſleep, as if he were in continual Employment; judge then if it be not needful to bid this Man *ariſe*.

Laſtly, This Voice may import, that Man is ſpiritually dead. *God* is the Life of the Soul, as *it* is of the Body; while he dwells there, it is both comely and active, but once deſtitute of his Preſence, becomes a Carcaſe, where, beſides Privation of Life and Motion, there is a poſitive Filthineſs, a Putrefaction in the Soul, unſpeakably worſe than that of dead Bodies, *corruptio optimi peſſima*. And as dead Bodies are removed from the Sight of Men, dead Souls are caſt out from the favourable Sight of God, till Chriſt's ſaying *ariſe*, revive them. The Miniſters of the Word are appointed to cry, *ariſe*, indifferently to all that hear them; and Chriſt hath reſerved this Privilege and Liberty, to join his effective Voice, when and to whom he pleaſes. A carnal Man may ſhew his Teeth at this, but who is he that can, by any ſolid Reaſon, charge Abſurdity upon this way of diſpenſing outward and inward Vocation? I will not here mention their idle Cavils, the Scripture is undeniably clear in this, that Man is naturally *dead in Sin*. The Goſpel bids him *ariſe*, and it is Chriſt that is his Life, and that raiſes him. Thus we ſee, in ſome Meaſure, what

what it is for Men to *ariſe*. Now being riſen they muſt *ſhine*, and that two Ways, *jointly and publickly*, as they make up viſible Churches; and likewiſe *perſonally*, in their particular Converſation. Firſt then, What is the ſhining of the true Church? Doth not a Church then ſhine, when Church Service is raiſed from a decent and primitive Simplicity, and decored with pompous Ceremonies, with rich Furniture, and gaudy Veſtments? Is not the Church then beautiful? Yes, indeed; but all the Queſtion is, Whether this be the proper genuine Beauty or no; whether this be not ſtrangeFire, as the Fire that *Aarons* Sons uſed which became vain, and was taken as ſtrange Fire? Methinks it cannot be better decided, than to refer it to St. *John* in his Book of the *Revelations*. We find there the Deſcriptions of two ſeveral Women, the *one* riding in State, arrayed in Purple, decked with Gold and precious Stones and Pearl, *Rev.* xvii. 3. the *other* in rich Attire too, but of another Kind, clothed with the Sun, and a Crown of twelve Stars on her Head. The other's Decorement was all earthly, this Woman's is all celeſtial: What need ſhe borrow Light and Beauty from precious Stones, that is clothed with the Sun, and crowned with Stars? She wears no ſublunary Ornaments, but, which is more noble, ſhe treads upon them, the Moon is under her Feet. Now if you know (as you do all without doubt) which of theſe two is the Spouſe of Chriſt, you can eaſily reſolve the Queſtion. The Truth is, thoſe Things ſeem to deck Religion, but they undo it. Obſerve where they are moſt uſed, and we ſhall find little or no Subſtance of Devotion under them; as we ſee in that Apoſtate Church of *Rome*. This painting is diſhonourable for Chriſt's Spouſe, and beſides, it ſpoils her natural Complexion. The ſuperſtitious Uſe of Torches and Lights in the Church by Day, is a Kind of *Chap.* 12.

of ſhining, but ſurely not commanded here. No, it is an Affront done both to the Sun in the Heaven, and to the Sun of Righteouſneſs in the Church.

What is meant then when the Church is commanded to *ſhine* or *be enlightened?* Theſe two Readings give the entire Senſe of the Word; for firſt having no Light of herſelf, ſhe muſt *receive Light*, and then *ſhew it*, *be enlightened* and then *ſhine*. She is enlightened by Chriſt the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ſhining in the Sphere of the Goſpel. *This is that Light that comes to* her, and *the Glory of the Lord that ariſes upon her.* Hence ſhe receives her Laws and Form of Government, and her ſhining is briefly the pure Exerciſe of thoſe and Conformity to them.

And the perſonal ſhining of the ſeveral Members of a Church, is a comely Congruity with pure Worſhip and Diſcipline, and it is that which now is moſt needful to be urged. Every Chriſtian Soul is perſonally engaged firſt to be enlightened, and then to ſhine, and we muſt draw our Light for ourſelves from that ſame Source that furniſhes the Church with her publick Light. There is a Word in the civil Law, *Uxor fulget radiis mariti*, the Wife ſhines by the Rays of her Husband's Light. Now every faithful Soul is eſpouſed to Chriſt, and therefore may well ſhine, ſeeing the Sun himſelf is their Husband. He adorns them with a double Beauty of *Juſtification* and *Sanctification:* By *that*, they ſhine more eſpecially to God, by *this* to Men. And may not theſe two be ſignified by a double Character given to the Spouſe in the *Cant.* vi. 20. *She is fair as the Moon, and clear as the Sun*; the leſſer Light is that of Sanctification, *fair as the Moon*; that of Juſtification the greater, by which, *ſhe is as clear as the Sun.* The Sun is perfectly luminous, but the Moon is but half enlightened: So the Believer is perfectly juſtified, but ſanctified only in Part, his one Half, his Fleſh,

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is dark, and as the partial Illumination is the Reaſon of ſo many Changes in the Moon, to which Changes the Sun is not ſubject at all, ſo the Imperfection of a Chriſtian's Holineſs, is the Cauſe of ſo many Waxings and Wanings, and great Inequality in his Performances, whereas in the mean while his Juſtification remains conſtantly like itſelf: *This* is imputed, *that* inherent. The Light of Sanctification muſt begin in the Underſtanding, and from thence be transfuſed to the Affections, the inferior Parts of the Soul, and from thence break forth and ſhine into Action. This is then the Nature of the Duties, *ariſe and ſhine.*

The Univerſality of the Subject which was the ſecond Head, is this, That every Man that knows Chriſt is here engaged to ſhine too. Neither Grandeur exempts from the Duty of ſhining, nor doth Meanneſs exclude from the Privilege of ſhining. Men of low Condition in this World need not deſpair of it, for it is a ſpiritual Act; great Men need not deſpiſe it, for it is a noble Act to ſhine by Chriſt's Light. In the 3d *Ver.* of this *Chap.* it is ſaid to the Church, *Kings ſhall come to the Brightneſs of thy Riſing.* To what end, but to partake of her Light and ſhine with her? And indeed the regal Attire of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and the white Robes of Holineſs, will exceeding well become Kings and Princes. *Give the King thy Judgments, O Lord, and thy Righteouſneſs to the King's Son.*

The third and laſt thing propounded was, the Force of the Reaſon, That *Chriſt's Preſence* engages to *ariſe and ſhine*, wherein it is ſuppoſed that Chriſt declared in the Goſpel, is the Light which is ſaid here to come, and the Glory of the Lord which is ſaid to be riſen; ſo that now it ſhould be more amply cleared, how Chriſt is Light, and the Glory of the Lord, and what his Coming and Riſing is, but

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of theſe afterwards. I ſhall cloſe now with a Word of Exhortation.

Ariſe then, *for the Glory of the Lord is riſen.*] The Day of the Goſpel is too precious that any of it ſhould be ſpent in Sleep or Idleneſs, or worthleſs Buſineſs. Worthleſs Buſineſs detains many of us; *ariſe* immortal Souls from moyling in the Duſt, and working in the Clay like *Egyptian* Captives. Addreſs yourſelves to more noble Work; there is a Redeemer come that will pay your Ranſom, and reſcue you from ſuch vile Service, for more excellent Employment. It is ſtrange how the Souls of Chriſtians can ſo much forget their firſt Original from Heaven, and their new Hopes of returning thither, and the rich Price of their Redemption, and forgetting all theſe, dwell ſo low, and dote ſo much upon Trifles; how is it that they hear not their well beloved's Voice crying, *Ariſe my Love, my fair one, and come away?* Though the Eyes of true Believers are ſo enlightened, that they ſhall not ſleep unto Death, yet their Spirits are often ſeized with a Kind of Drowſineſs and Slumber, and ſometimes even then, when they ſhould be of moſt Activity. The Time of Chriſt's Check to his three Diſciples made it very ſharp, tho' the Words are mild, *What? could you not watch with me one Hour?* Shake off, believing Souls, that heavy Humour. *Ariſe*, and ſatiate the Eye of Faith with the Contemplation of Chriſt's Beauty, and follow after him till you attain the Place of full Enjoyment. And you others that never yet ſaw him, *ariſe*, and admire his matchleſs Excellency. The Things you eſteem great, are but ſo thro' Ignorance of his Greatneſs; his Brightneſs, if you ſaw it, would obſcure to you the greateſt Splendor of the World, as all thoſe Stars that go never down upon us, yet they are ſwallowed up in the ſurpaſſing Light of the Sun when it ariſes. *Stand up from the dead,*

dead, and he ſhall give you Light. Ariſe and work while it is Day, for the Night ſhall come wherein none can work, ſays our Saviour himſelf. Happy are they that ariſe early in the Morning of their Youth; for the Day of Life is very ſhort, and the Art of Chriſtianity long and difficult. Is it not a grievous thing, that Men never conſider why they came into the World, till they be upon the Point of going out again, nor think how to live, till they be ſummoned to die? But moſt of all unhappy he, that never wakens out of that pleaſing Dream of falſe Happineſs, till he fall into eternal Miſery: *Ariſe* then betimes, and prevent this ſad Awakening.

And being riſen, put on your beautiful Garments, *Iſa.* lii. 1. Draw towards you with the Hand of Faith the rich Mantle of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs. 'Tis time to awake, ſays the Apoſtle, *Rom.* xiii. 11. and preſently after, *Put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And it is a Wonder how a Sinner can reſt, while he is out of this Garment; for there is no other in Heaven nor Earth can make him ſhine to God, and ſo ſhelter him from the Stroke of Juſtice. Put him on then, and ſo ſhine; being thus clothed, thou ſhalt ſhine in Juſtification, and likewiſe in Sanctity. What a Privilege is it to be like God? a ſanctified Conſcience, what can be ſaid againſt it? And firſt have an enlightened Underſtanding, for that is the proper Seat of Light; that ignorant Zeal that *Rome* commends, expoſes Religion to Scorn and Contempt: Heat without Light is the Character of the Fire of Hell. I know all are not tied to a like Degree of Knowledge, but certainly all are obliged to have a Competency, and Diligence for Increaſe. Aſpire then to be intelligent Chriſtians, and to know well what you believe; let your Minds be filled with Knowledge, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. But let it not ſtop there, it muſt have Influence into the Will,

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Lux eſt vehiculum caloris, true Light conveys Heat. All the Knowledge that the natural Man hath of Chriſt, not warming his Affection to Chriſt, is but *ignis fatuus*, a vain Light, it ſhall never lead him to Happineſs. Saving Light produces Love, and by that acts. Faith works by Love, ſays the Apoſtle. That breaks forth and ſhines in the Life, in Godlineſs, Righteouſneſs and Sobriety. Shine then in all theſe, firſt in Piety towards God, for this is the Reflexion of theſe Rays of Light back toward their Source, and this will command the other two. No Man that ſhines in Godlineſs will wallow in Injuſtice and Intemperance. Guile and Wrong cannot endure the Light; they that are unjuſt cannot ſhine. And let them never offer to ſhine among Chriſtians that are not ſober, but ſtained with Riot and Uncleanneſs; theſe foul Enormities lay waſte the Conſcience, and put out the Light. How can any Seeds of Grace ſubſiſt undrowned, that are expoſed to a daily Deluge of Cups? How can that pure Spirit, that choſe the Likeneſs of a chaſte Dove, dwell and give Light in that Soul that is a Neſt of impure and filthy Luſts? No, there can be no Fellowſhip betwixt this celeſtial Light, whereby we ſhould ſhine, and thoſe infernal Works of Darkneſs. Let profane Men hold it a chief Strain of Wit to ſcoff at Purity, but you that pretend Heaven-ward in good earneſt, and mean to ſhine in Glory, ſhine here in Holineſs; *For without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee God.* And do it with thoſe Qualifications, (1.) *Conſtantly* in every Eſtate: Let not this Divine Light go out, neither by Day in Proſperity, nor by Night in Adverſity. In every Place do not ſhine clear, and be dark in your Chamber; they that do thus *have their Reward.* That's a ſad Word, if rightly underſtood, beware of Hypocriſy. Again, ſhine *progreſſively*, gaining ſtill more and more Victory over Darkneſs, till you attain unmix'd and per-

perfect Light. The Way of the Juſt, ſays *Solomon*, *is like the ſhining Light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect Day*, Prov. iv. 18. Laſtly, Shine *humbly* to his Glory, whoſe Light you borrow; not to ſhew forth your own Excellencies, but his, *who hath called you from Darkneſs to his marvellous Light*, 1 Pet. ii. 9. If we be Children of Light, our Brightneſs muſt praiſe the Father of Lights: *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they ſeeing your good Works*, (not yourſelves if you can be hid, as the Sun affords its Light and will ſcarce ſuffer us to look upon itſelf) *may glorify* (not you, but) *your heavenly Father*, Matth. v. 6. To conclude,

The pure Light of the Church is revived, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon you, and upon this Glory there ſhall be a Defence. If God be your Glory in the midſt of you, he will be likewiſe a Wall of Fire round about you. All the Danger is, if we fall ſhort in the Duty of ſhining; but as you deſire that this Glory ſhould abide and dwell amongſt you, let all Eſtates of Men provoke one another to ſhine bright in Holineſs. You who either by Birth or Office are in eminent Station, know that you were ſet there to be eminent and exemplary in ſhining, as Stars of more notable Magnitude. You who are Miniſters of this Light, know that you are the Light of the World; and if the very Light become Darkneſs, how great will that Darkneſs be? You that are of a lower Order, know that you muſt ſhine too; for it is a common Duty. There is a certain Company of ſmall Stars in the Firmament, which though they cannot be each one ſeverally ſeen, yet being many, their united Light makes a conſpicuous Brightneſs in the Heaven, which is called the *milky Way*: So, tho' the ſhining of every private Chriſtian is not ſo much ſeverally remarkable, yet the Concourſe and Meeting of their Light together, will

make a bright Path of Holineſs ſhine in the Church.

Now to the end we may each one ſhine in our Meaſure, we muſt learn to turn ourſelves often towards him from whom our Light is derived. Converſing with him will make us more and more like him. There is a ſecret unknown Virtue for this Purpoſe in ſecret Prayer and Meditation; were we more in the Mount with God, our Faces would ſhine more with Men. Let us then reſcue from the World all the Time we can, to reſort frequently thither, till ſuch Time as the Soul, which is now often pulled down again by the Fleſh, ſhall let that Mantle fall and come down no more, *but ſhine there without Spot, and be for ever ſatisfied with her Maker's Image.*

SERMON V.

PREFACE.

ART imitates Nature, and the nearer it comes to Nature in its Effects, it is the more excellent. Grace is the new Nature of a Chriſtian, and Hypocriſy that Art that counterfeits it; and the more exquiſite it is in Imitation, it is the more plauſible to Men, but the more abominable to God. It may frame a ſpiritual Man in Image ſo to the Life, that not only others, but even the Hypocrite himſelf, may admire it, and favouring his own Artifice, may be deceived ſo far, as to ſay, and to think, it lives, and fall in love with it; but he is no leſs abhorred by the Searcher of Hearts, than pleaſing

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to himſelf. Surely this Miſchief of Hypocriſy can never be enough inveighed againſt. When Religion is in Requeſt, it is the chief Malady of the Church, and Numbers die of it; tho', becauſe it is a ſubtile and inward Evil, it be little perceived. It is to be feared there are many ſick of it that look well and comely in God's outward Worſhip, and they may paſs well in good Weather, in Times of Peace, but Days of Adverſity are Days of Trial. The proſperous Eſtate of the Church makes Hypocrites, and her Diſtreſs diſcovers them; but if they eſcape ſuch Trial, there is one inevitable Day coming, wherein all ſecret Things ſhall be made manifeſt. Men ſhall be turn'd inſide out; and amongſt all Sinners that ſhall then be brought before that Judgment Seat, the deformedeſt Sight ſhall be an unmasked Hypocrite, and the heavieſt Sentence ſhall be his Portion.

Oh! that the Conſideration of this would ſcar us out of that falſe Diſguiſe in Time, and ſet us all upon the Study of Sincerity. Precious is that Grace in God's Eſteem; a little of it will weigh down Mountains of formal Religion, in the Balance of the Sanctuary. Which of us have not now brought Hypocriſy, more or leſs, into this Houſe of God? Oh! that it were not with Intention to nouriſh it, but with Deſire to be here cured of it; for he alone that hates it ſo much, can cure it; he alone can confer upon us that Sincerity wherein he mainly delights. If we have a mind, indeed, to be endued with it, it is no where elſe to be had, we muſt intreat it of God by humble Prayer, in the Name of his wel-beloved Son, by the Aſſiſtance of his Holy Spirit.

SECOND SERMON.

Isaiah LX. 1.

Ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee.

Truly Light is ſweet, and it is a pleaſing thing to behold the Sun, ſays the Preacher, *Eccleſ.* xi. 7. but the Interchange of Night with Day adds to its Beauty, and the longeſt Night makes Day the welcomeſt; as that People well knows, whoſe Situation in the World gives them a five or ſix Months Night all of one Piece. It is reported of ſome of them, that when they conceive their Night draws towards an End, they put on their richeſt Apparel, and climb up to the higheſt Mountains, with Emulation, who ſhall firſt diſcover the returning Light; which, ſo ſoon as it appears, they ſalute, with Acclamations of Joy, and welcome it with ſolemn Feaſting, and all other Teſtimonies of exceeding Gladneſs. But ſuch is the Lethargy of ſinful Man, that he ſtirs not to meet his ſpiritual Light; and, which is worſe, when it comes upon him, it finds him in Love with Darkneſs. Inſtead of his Shouts of Joy for this Light, many a Cry muſt be ſounded in his Ears, to awaken him; and it is well too, if at length he hear and obey this Voice, *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy Light is come*, &c. It is clear that the Words contain a *Command*, and the *Reaſon* of it: The *Command* to a twofold Act; the *Reaſon* under two Expreſſions, proportionately different. Good Reaſon the Church ſhould *ariſe*, when the *Lord's Glory is riſen upon her*; and it is very congruous, ſhe ſhould be *enlightened* and *ſhine* when *her Light is come*. Of thoſe two Acts or Duties, ſomewhat was formerly ſpoken; and the Reaſon likewiſe was made uſe of ſo far as relative to thoſe Duties,

and

and tending to their Inforcement. But the Meaning of the Phraſes, in which the Reaſon is expreſt, was rather, at that Time, ſuppoſed, than either duly proved or illuſtrated; ſo that it will be now expedient to conſider, ſimply in themſelves, theſe latter Words: *Thy Light is come*, &c.

So far as this Prophecy hath Reſpect to the Reduction of the *Jews* from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, that *temporal Deliverance*, and enſuing Peace and Proſperity, was *their Light*, and that *Divine Power* by which it was effected, was this *Glory of the Lord*. And indeed, both theſe Expreſſions are frequently uſed, in ſuch a Senſe in Holy Writ: *When I waited for Light, there came Darkneſs*, ſays *Job*, in his xxx. *Chap.* 26. *Ver.* (ſo *Iſaiah* lviii. 8. and many other Places,) and the Glory of the Lord, for a ſingular Effect of his Power, *Joh.* xi. 40. *Iſa.* lx. 18. and elſewhere. But this literal Senſe is but a Step to elevate the Prophet to a Sight of Chriſt's ſpiritual Kingdom, which is uſual with him; as our Saviour himſelf teſtifies of another of his Prophecies, *theſe Things*, ſaid *Iſaias*, *when he ſaw his Glory, and ſpoke of him*, *Joh.* xii. 41. It was a Sight of that ſame Glory, that makes him ſay, *thy Light was true*, &c.

In theſe Words, there are three Things, concerning Chriſt, repreſented to the Church's View. *Firſt*, His Beauty and Excellency, in that he is called *Light*, and *the Glory of the Lord*. *Secondly*, The Church's Propriety and Intereſt in him, *thy Light*, and *riſen upon thee*, which hath a reſtrictive Emphaſis, as the very next Verſe doth clearly manifeſt. As he is *originally* the Glory of the Lord, and the Light of the Lord, *lumen de lumine*, ſo he is *communicatively* the Church's Light and her Glory too, as it is expreſt in the 19th *Ver.* of the ſame *Chap. thy God, thy Glory*, Thus hath ſhe both his Worth, and her own Right in him, to conſider. *Thirdly*, His Preſence or her actual

actual Poſſeſſion, *he is come, and is riſen.* And in theſe the Church, and each faithful Soul, may find a double Spring of Affection, the one of Love, the other of Joy. The tranſcendent Beauty of Chriſt makes him the choiceſt Object of Love, and her Property in him or Title to him, together with Poſſeſſion, is the proper Cauſe of ſolid Joy.

Firſt then, this Excellency is expreſt by theſe two Characters, *Light* and *the Glory of the Lord.* Concerning which, it will be fit both to demonſtrate that they are the proper Titles of Chriſt, and here to be taken for him; as alſo, to ſhew what they ſignify in him.

Indeed, the Apoſtle in his ſecond Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, 3d *Chap.* inſiſts much in extolling both *the Light* and *the Glory* of the Goſpel, and in the 4th *Ver.* of the next *Chap.* ſpeaks of *the Light of the glorious Goſpel*, but he immediately intimates whence it hath this Light and Glory; *the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt*, ſays he, *who is the Image of God.* So that it is moſt unneceſſary to enquire whether the Meſſiah, or the Word that reveals him, be rather here couched under theſe Terms of *Light* and *the Glory of the Lord.* Theſe two agree ſo well altogether, and theſe Words agree ſo well to them both, that it were an Injury to attempt to ſever them. All the Difference will be this, Chriſt is that incomplex and ſubſtantial Light, the Goſpel that complex Light wherein he appears. But (not to be guilty of *dark* Terms, eſpecially in a Diſcourſe of *Light*) I take it in this Reſemblance, Chriſt is the Sun, and the Goſpel his proper Sphere or Heaven, wherein he gives Light to his Church. He is *primarily* the Glory of the Lord, and the Goſpel by *Participation*, becauſe it declares him: So that much of that which ſhall be ſpoken here of Chriſt, will be ſecondarily to be underſtood of the Goſpel of Chriſt.

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That Chriſt is *Light*, the Scripture ſpeaks abundantly. His own Voice, concerning himſelf, (notwithſtanding the Cavil of the *Phariſees*) is above all Exception, for he is Truth itſelf, *I am the Light of the World*, ſaith he, *he that follows me ſhall not walk in Darkneſs*, Joh. viii. 12. The Father that ſent him gives him the ſame Title, *I will give thee for a Light of the Gentiles*, Iſa. xlii. 6. and xlix. 6. And not to multiply Citations of the Prophets and Evangeliſts, who with one Conſent all magnify this Light, take the true Teſtimony of a falſe Prophet (and indeed, the favourable Witneſs of an Adverſary is ſtrongeſt.) It is that of *Balaam*, who ſaw that Chriſt was *Light*, tho' becauſe he ſaw him afar off (as he ſays himſelf) and had not his Eye fortified, like the true Prophets, he diſcerned him but as a Star. *There ſhall come a Star out of* Jacob, *&c. Numb.* xxiv. 17. But what need we go ſo far, to be certified what this Light and Glory of the Lord is, the Lord of Glory himſelf, ſeeing the very next Verſe to the Text aſſures us of it? *Upon thee ſhall the Lord ariſe.* And in the 19th *Ver. The Lord ſhall be thy everlaſting Light, and thy God thy Glory.*

By this Time, I hope, it is clear, That the eternal Son of God, co-eſſential with his Father, was he that gave Accompliſhment to this Prophecy, by appearing to the World wrapped up in the Darkneſs of human Nature. He is *that Day-ſpring from on high that hath viſited us*, as old *Zacharias* ſpeaks, *Luk.* i. 78.

Among all created Excellencies, none can be borrowed more fitly repreſenting Chriſt than that of Light. And is it not Chriſt that decks his Church with ſupernatural Beauty, and makes it indeed Κόσμος, a comely World, called out of the World? But the manifold Agreement of Light with Chriſt, doth require more particular Conſideration.

Light

Light is (as they call it) *primum viſible*, the firſt Object of Sight. And Jeſus Chriſt, whom the Apoſtle ſtiles *God over all bleſſed for ever*, is, *primum intelligible*, the prime Object of the Underſtanding. What is then become of that divine Sparkle, that underſtanding Soul, that the Father of Spirits breathes into theſe Bodies, that all our Thoughts creep here below, and leave their chief and nobleſt Object unconſidered? Which of us may not complain, (tho' few of us do) that our Souls have either no Wings to elevate themſelves to the Contemplation of him, from whom they iſſued; or if they make Offers at it, our Affections, engaged to the World, make us, like a Bird tied by the Foot, fall preſently down again into the Mire? It is high Time to leave hunting Shadows, and to turn our internal Eye to the beholding of this uncreated Light.

In this elementary World, Light being (as we hear) the firſt viſible, all Things are ſeen by it, and it by itſelf. Thus is Chriſt, among ſpiritual Things, in the Elect World of his Church; *all Things are made manifeſt by the Light*, ſays the Apoſtle, *Eph.* v. 13. ſpeaking of Chriſt, as the following Verſe doth evidently teſtify. It is in his Word that he ſhines, and makes it a directing and convincing Light, to diſcover all things that concern his Church and Himſelf, to be known by its own Brightneſs. How impertinent then is that Queſtion ſo much toſſed by the *Romiſh* Church, How know you the Scriptures (ſay they) to be the Word of God, without the Teſtimony of the Church? I would ask one of them again, How they can know that it is Day-light, except ſome light a Candle to let them ſee it? They are little verſed in Holy Scripture, that know not that it is frequently called *Light*; and they are ſenſeleſs that know not that Light is ſeen and known by itſelf. *If our Goſpel be hid*, ſays the Apoſtle, *it is*

hid

hid to them that periſh; the God of this World having blinded their Minds againſt the *Light of the glorious Goſpel*, &c. no wonder if ſuch ſtand in need of a Teſtimony. A blind Man knows not that it is Light at Noon-day, but by Report: But to thoſe that have Eyes, Light is ſeen by itſelf.

Again, it makes all other things that are in themſelves to become actually viſible (as they ſpeak;) ſo by the Word of this ſubſtantial *Word* Jeſus Chriſt, all things in Religion are tried and diſcovered. The very Authority of the Church which they obtrude ſo confidently, muſt be ſtopt and examined by theſe Scriptures, which they would make ſtand to its Courteſy. Doctrines and Worſhip muſt be tried by this Light; and what will not endure this Trial, muſt not be endured in the Houſe of God. *To the Law and to the Teſtimonies* (ſays the Prophet) *if they ſpeak not according to this Word, it is becauſe there is no Light in them*, Iſa. viii. 20. The Rays of Chriſt's Light are diſplayed thro' both his Teſtaments, and in them we ſee him.

But Oh! How ſublime is the Knowledge of him; none is ignorant that there is Light, yet what Light is, few know; the beſt Wits are troubled to define it: So all that bear the Name of Chriſtians acknowledge that Chriſt is, but to know what he is, is of marvellous Difficulty. In a ſpeculative Way, unſoundable is the Depth of his Nature and Properties, *and his Generation who can declare?* ſays our Prophet; I define not, whether his eternal Generation, or his Incarnation in Time. Theſe are Myſteries that ſhall hold the very Angels buſy in Admiration for ever; and for experimental Knowledge by Faith, how ſmall is the Number of thoſe that are truly acquainted with it?

Again, Light fitly reſembles Chriſt in Purity, it viſits many impure Places and lights upon the baſeſt

Parts of the Earth, and yet remains moſt pure and undefiled. Chriſt ſees and takes notice of all the Enormities, and ſinful Pollutions in the World, (as *David* ſays of the Sun, *Pſal.* xix.) *there is nothing hid from his Beams*; yea many of thoſe foul Evils he cures, and purgeth away theſe Pollutions, and yet is never ſtained by them in the leaſt Degree. He is a Phyſician not capable of Infection, and therefore while he dwelt among Men, he ſhunned not Publicans and Sinners, but ſought them rather; for with ſuch was his Buſineſs and Employment. Indeed for a frail Man to be too bold in frequenting profane and obſtinate Perſons, tho' with Intention to reclaim them, is not always ſo ſafe. *Metus eſt ne attrahant*; they may pull him in, that would help them forth, and pollute him that would cleanſe them. But our Saviour, the Light of the World, runs no ſuch Hazard, he is ſtronger than the perverſeſt Sinner, yea than the Prince of Darkneſs himſelf, over whom his Banners are always victorious, and purer than to be in Danger of Pollution. His precious Blood is a Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanneſs, Sinners are purified by it, and it is not defiled by them. Thouſands have waſhed in it, yet it ſhall abide, and always ſhall be moſt perfectly pure: *And ſuch a High Prieſt was needful for us*, ἀμίαντος *undefiled*, and tho' converſant with Sinners, to communicate to them his Goodneſs, yet *ſeparate from Sinners* in Immunity from their Evil, *Heb.* vii. 26.

To this agrees well that Title, the Prophet *Malachi* gives him, *Chap.* iv. 2. when he calls him the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*, full of Purity, and Righteouſneſs, (as the Sun is of Light) all luminous, without Spot, ſubject to no Eclipſe in himſelf, his Light being his own, tho' our Sins interpoſed may hide him ſometimes from us, as thoſe real Eclipſes in the Sun, are rather ours, for we are deprived of Light, but

but not the Sun. Chriſt is many ways moſt fitly called the Sun; for ſince all created Light falls infinitely ſhort of his Worth, the Prince and Chief of them, the Sun, cannot but ſuit beſt, ſo far as may be, to ſet forth his Excellency.

The Light of the Sun is neither parted nor diminiſhed, by being imparted to many ſeveral People and Nations that behold it at one Time; nor is the Righteouſneſs of this Sun of Righteouſneſs either leſſened to himſelf, or to ſeveral Believers, by many partaking of it at once; it is wholly conferred upon each one of them, and remains whole in himſelf. Hence it is, that not only Chriſt invites ſo liberally Sinners to come to him, but even juſtified Perſons would ſo gladly draw all others to lay hold on this Righteouſneſs of their Redeemer; knowing well, that if all the World were enriched by it, they themſelves would be no whit the poorer.

Again, the Sun hath a viviſying Power, not only of Plants and Vegetables, but, if Philoſophers be right, *Sol & homo generant hominem*; it hath a ſpecial Influence in the Generation of Man, but is both more certainly and more eminently true of this Sun we ſpeak of, in Man's Regeneration; that he is the proper and principal Efficient of it. The Evangeliſt calls him at once, *The Light and the Life of Men*, Joh. i. 4. To ſay nothing of him as a Treaſure, he is the Source of our ſpiritual Life and Motion.

When the Sun takes its Courſe towards us in the Seaſon of the Year, it drives away the ſharp Froſts and the heavy Fogs of Winter, it clears the Heavens, decks the Earth with Variety of Plants and Flowers, and awakes the Birds to the pleaſant Strains of their natural Muſick. When Chriſt, after a kind of Winter-abſence, returns to viſit a declining Church, admirable is the Change that he produces; all begins to flouriſh by his ſweet Influence; his

Houſe, his Worſhip, his People, are all clothed with a new Beauty, but it is ſpiritual; and therefore none but ſpiritual Eyes can diſcern it. When he will thus return, all the Power and Policy of Man can no more hinder him, than it could ſtay the Courſe of the Sun in its Circle. In like manner, a deſerted forlaken Soul, that can do nothing but languiſh and droop, while Chriſt withdraws himſelf, what inexpreſſible Vigour and Alacrity finds it at his returning? Then thoſe Graces, that while they lurkt, ſeem'd to have been loſt and quite extinguiſhed, bud forth anew with pleaſant Colour and fragrant Smell. 'Tis the Light of his Countenance that baniſheth their falſe Fears, that ſtrengthens their Faith, and cures their ſpiritual Infirmities. This Sun is indeed the ſovereign Phyſician: *Unto you that fear my Name, ſhall the Sun of Righteouſneſs ariſe with healing under his Wings*, Mal. iv. 2.

Finally, All Darkneſs flys away before him: It was his ariſing in the World that made the Day break and the Shadows fly away. The Types and Shadows of the Law were then aboliſhed. It was his Light that diſpelled the Miſts of Ignorance and Idolatry, and he alone delivers the Soul from the Night of Sin and Miſery procured by it: All the Stars, and the Moon with them, cannot make it Day in the World; this is the Sun's *Peculiar*: Nor can Nature's higheſt Light, the moſt refined Science and Morality, make it Day in the Soul; for this is *Chriſt*'s.

The common Light of Reaſon, every Man that comes into the World hath from him as his Creator, but the ſpecial Light of Grace they alone that are *born again* have from him as their Saviour. Groſs is the Darkneſs of every natural Mind, till Chriſt enlighten it. It can neither diſcern nor *receive* the Things of God, οὐ δέχεται. *Ye were Darkneſs*, (ſays the

the Apoſtle) *but now are you Light in the Lord.* It is nothing elſe but a Maſs of Darkneſs; and the Companion of Darkneſs is Confuſion, as it was in the Maſs of the World before Light was created. And what is there under Heaven more confuſed than a carnal Mind? The Affections quite out of Order, and though all naught, yet ſometimes fighting one with another, and continually hurrying the Judgment whither they pleaſe. Now to diſſipate this Darkneſs, and remedy this Confuſion, Chriſt ſhines externally in his Word: But too much daily Experience teſtifies, that this is not ſufficient; therefore to thoſe whom he will make Children of the Light, to meet with this outward Light of his Word, he gives another internal, by the Spirit. The Sun can make dark Things clear, but it cannot make a blind Man ſee them: But herein is the Excellency of this Sun, that he illuminates not only the *Object*, but the *Faculty*; doth not only reveal the Myſteries of his Kingdom, but opens blind Eyes to behold them. And the firſt Lineament of the renewed Image of God in Man, is that Light in the Underſtanding, removing not only that ſimple Ignorance of Divine Things, but theſe Miſconceits likewiſe, and falſe Principles, and that wicked Pertinacy, whereof Man's Mind is naturally full. He that *at firſt commanded Light to ſhine out of Darkneſs*, infuſeth ſaving *Knowledge and Light* into the dark Soul of Man. And this Light (as was ſaid) kindles Love. It is *vehiculum caloris*, hath a powerful Influence, begetting Heat in the Affections. Nor can this Divine Light be ever again fully extinguiſhed, but conducts the Soul that hath received it, till it be received to the Land of Light and perfect Happineſs. Thus in our Redeemer is *the Fountain of Life*, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks. *And in his Light do we ſee Light*, Pſal. xxxvi. 9.

He is likewiſe here ſtiled, *The Glory of the Lord.* In

In 2 *Sam.* 4th *Chap.* the Ark of God is called *the Glory*, but it enjoyeth that Name as a Type of Chriſt, in whom that now which the Ark contained was fulfilled. The Tabernacle is called *the Dwelling of God's Glory*, Pſal. xxvi. 8. likewiſe typifying him in the Tabernacle, in whoſe human Nature that Glory dwells far more excellently. *Joh.* i. 14. Εσκήνωσεν ἐν ἡμῖν, *he dwelt in a Tabernacle among us, and we ſaw his Glory as the Glory of the only begotten Son of God, full of Grace and Truth.* The Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* calls him ἀπαύγασμα, *the Brightneſs of his Father's Glory, and the Character of his Perſon*, Heb. i. 3. And under theſe Expreſſions lies that remarkable Myſtery of the Son's eternal Relation to the Father, which is rather humbly to be adored than boldly to be explained, either by God's perfect underſtanding of his own Eſſence, or by any other Notion. It is true, he is called *the Wiſdom of the Father*, but this Wiſdom is too wonderful for us. He is called *the Word*, but what this Word means, I think, we ſhall not well know till we ſee him Face to Face, and contemplate him in the Light of Glory. Mean while we may ſee him to be the Glory of the Lord in a ſafer Way, and ſufficient Meaſure to guide us on to that clear Viſion reſerved above for us. *We ſaw his Glory*, ſays that ſublime Evangeliſt. But how could this excellent Glory be ſeen by ſinful Men, and not aſtoniſh and ſtrike dead the Beholders? *He was made Fleſh, and dwelt among us*, (ſays he) *and ſo we ſaw his Glory.* That Majeſty that we could never have lookt upon, he veiled with human Fleſh, that we might not die, yea live, by ſeeing him. There he ſtood behind the Wall, and ſhewed himſelf through the Trellis. *In him dwelt the Fulneſs of the Godhead*, Col. ii. 9. but it was σωματικῶς, *bodily*: For who could have endured the Splendor of the Godhead's Fulneſs, if that Cloud of his Body had not been drawn

drawn betwixt? And through it did ſhine that Grace and Truth, that Wiſdom and Power in the Work of our Redemption, whereby he was clearly manifeſted to be the Glory of the Lord.

Surely we need not now ask the Church, or a believing Soul, *What is her Beloved more than another?* Or if we do, well may ſhe anſwer, *He is the chiefeſt among ten thouſand, and altogether lovely*; for he is *the Light of the World*, and *the Glory of the Lord.* Let not the numerous Titles of earthly Potentates be once admitted into Compariſon with theſe. If we believe *David*, in his 62d *Pſal.* 9th *Verſ.* the ſtatelieſt Things and Perſons in the World being balanced with *Vanity* itſelf, are found lighter than *it:* And ſhall we offer to weigh them with Chriſt? If we knew him rightly, we would not ſell the leaſt Glance or Beam of this Light of his Countenance for the higheſt Favour of mortal Men, tho' it were conſtant and unchangeable, which it is not. It is Ignorance of Chriſt that maintains the Credit of thoſe Vanities we admire. The Chriſtian that is truly acquainted with him, enamoured with the Brightneſs of his Beauty, can generouſly trample upon the Smilings of the World with the one Foot, and her Frownings with the other. If he be rich or honourable, or both, yet he glories not in that, but Chriſt, who is *the Glory of the Lord*, is even then his chiefeſt Glory; and the Light of Chriſt obſcures that worldly Splendor in his Eſtimation. And as the Enjoyment of Chriſt overtops all his other Joys, ſo it overcomes his Griefs. As that great Light drowns the Light of Proſperity, it ſhines bright in the Darkneſs of Affliction: No Dungeon ſo cloſe that can keep out the Rays of Chriſt's Love from his beloved Priſoners. The World can no more take away this Light, than it can give it. *Unto the Juſt ariſeth Light in Darkneſs*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt: And, *When I ſit in Dark-*

Darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a Light unto me, ſays the Church in the 7th of *Micah*, 8th *Verſe*. And as this Light is a *Comfort*, ſo it is likewiſe a *Defence*, that ſuffers no more of Diſtreſs to come near the Godly than is profitable for them. Therefore we find very frequently in Scripture, where this Light and Glory is mentioned, Protection and Safety jointly ſpoken of: *The Lord is my Light, and withal my Salvation, whom ſhall I fear*, ſays *David*, Pſal. xxvii. 1. *The Lord is a Sun, and he is a Shield too*, Pſ. lxxxiv. 11. and truly I think him Shot-proof that hath the Sun for his Buckler. And for Glory; *Upon all the Glory ſhall be a Defence*, ſays our Prophet in his 4th *Chap.* 5th *Ver.* and the Prophet *Zachary*, where he calls the Lord the Church's *Glory in the midſt of her*, he calls him likewiſe *a Wall of Fire round about her*, Zach. ii. 4. The only Way then to be ſafe, is to keep this Light and this Glory entire. To part with any Part of this Glory, is to make a Breach in that Wall of Fire; and if that be a Means of Safety, let all Men judge. No, keep it whole, and then they muſt come through the Fire that will aſſault you. Nor is this Light only defenſive of the Church that embraceth it, but likewiſe deſtructive of all adverſe Powers. See a clear Teſtimony for this in *Iſa.* x. 17, 18. *And the Light of* Iſrael *ſhall be for a Fire, and his holy One for a Flame*, (ſpeaking there of the *Aſſyrians*) *and it ſhall burn and devour his Thorns and his Briers in one Day, and ſhall conſume the Glory of his Forreſt, and of his fruitful Field, both Soul and Body, and they ſhall be as when a Standard-bearer fainteth*, &c. Let ever then the Church of God entirely obſerve this *Light* and *Glory* of the Lord; and ſhe ſhall undoubtedly be preſerved by it.

But to cloſe in a Word, firſt to thoſe that know this Light, and then to thoſe that are yet Strangers to it.

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You who know Chriſt, glory in him perpetually. Well may he be your Glory, when he is the Glory of the Lord. There are ſome that pretend Love to Chriſt, and yet a taunting Word of ſome profane Miſcreant will almoſt make them aſhamed of him; how would they dy for Chriſt that are ſo tender as not to endure a Scoff for him? Where is that Spirit of *Moſes*, that accounted the very Reproaches of Chriſt greater Riches than the Treaſures of *Egypt?* O learn to glory in Chriſt, think highly of him, and ſpeak ſo too. Methinks it is the Diſcourſe in the World becomes Chriſtians beſt, to be ſpeaking one to another honourably of Jeſus Chriſt; and of all Men, the Preachers of his Goſpel ſhould be moſt frequent in this Subject. This ſhould be their great Theme, to extol and commend the Lord Jeſus, that they may inflame many Hearts with his Love: And beſt can they do this, who are moſt ſtrongly taken with this Love themſelves. Such will moſt gladly abaſe themſelves, that Chriſt may be magnified; and whatſoever be their Excellencies, they ſtill account Chriſt their Glory: And they are richly repaid, for he accounts them his Glory. This would ſeem a ſtrange Word, if it were not the Apoſtle's, *They are the Meſſengers of the Churches, and the Glory of Chriſt*, 2 Cor. viii. 23. Delight who will, either in Sloth and Ignorance on the one hand, or in vain Speculations and Strains of frothy Wit on the other; ſurely thoſe Preachers ſhall only be approved in the great Day, who have conſtantly endeavoured in their Meaſure to ſpeak the beſt and fitteſt they could for their Maſter's Advantage. And happy theſe Chriſtians, of what Eſtate ſoever, that in all Eſtates make Chriſt their Glory, and in all Actions have their Eye fixed upon his Glory, who is their Light and the Glory of the Lord!

Now to thoſe that are Strangers to him, (would to

God none that are to be ſpoken to were ſuch;) to them, I ſay, Notice would be given both of the Excellency and Neceſſity of Chriſt. Tho' it were poſſible to grope the Way to Happineſs in the Dark, yet none will deny but to be conducted thither by a conſtant Light, is both more ſafe and more delightful. But were there any Poſſibility to attain that End without this Light, the Neglect of it were not altogether ſo ſtrange. The Wonder of all is this, that Chriſt alone being both that Life, and the Way to it, and the Truth or Light that guides in that Way, yet Chriſtians (ſo called) ſhould eſteem and look after him as little, as if he were wholly needleſs. What meaneſt thou, O beſotted Sinner? Is it ſo light a thing to dy in thy Sins, and eternally for them, that thou wilt not ſo much as open and admit the Light of Salvation? What ſhalt thou pretend in that terrible Day? Tho' all other kind of People ſhould offer ſome Excuſe, thou who haſt heard the Goſpel ſhalt be ſpeechleſs. For not only ſhall the Rigour of Juſtice condemn thee, but Mercy itſelf ſhall plead againſt thee; for thou haſt deſpiſed it. That Light did come and was not embraced, ſhall be the main Condemnation. How many thouſands that make no Doubt of Heaven, yet ſhall then fall ſhort of it? It is not a ſuperficial Profeſſion that will then paſs current. It is not ſome publick Sighs and Groans from an unſanctified Heart, which either come from Cuſtom, or ſome preſent Touch of the Word; nor yet is it ſome ſudden Riſings of inward Affection towards Chriſt, upon the Report of his Worth, that ſhall then ſerve the Turn. The intellective Knowledge of Chriſt, the diſtinct underſtanding, yea the orthodox preaching of his Goſpel, the maintaining of his publick Cauſe, and ſuffering for it, ſhall not then be found ſufficient. Only that peculiar Apprehenſion of Chriſt, thoſe conſtant Flames

of

of ſpiritual Love, that even Courſe of holy walking in his Light, ſhall be theſe Characters whereby Chriſt ſhall own his Children, and admit them into the Inheritance of perfect Light. One of the Speakers in the Book of *Job*, diſcourſing of the Proſperity of the Ungodly, calls it but *his Candle*, and tells how long it can laſt: *His Candle* (ſays he) *ſhall be put out with him*; and that's the longeſt Term of it: If it laſt his Lifetime, it ſhall convey him no further, he goes into Eternity in the Dark; and therefore, as St. *John* ſays, he knows not whither he goeth. *Quò nunc abibis?* ſaid that Emperor to his Soul. Is it not a ſad thing, when the Soul that knows no other but worldly Light, muſt take Leave of it, and enter into eternal Darkneſs, there to be inceſſantly tormented with preſent Anguiſh, and the frightful Expectation of the laſt Judgment, where it muſt take again that Body which was the Complice of its Wickedneſs to be Partaker of its Puniſhment; where it ſhall have a double Miſery to behold Crowns of Immortality diſtributed to the Godly, after the ſhort Combates of this Life, and itſelf thruſt out among the Devils? Then ſhall all Men be ſome way ſenſible, what is the Worth of this now contemned Light, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The greateſt Number too late, for they ſhall be baniſh'd from it for ever. But the Righteous ſhall then moſt perfectly know, and for ever enjoy this Light and Glory of the Lord. *To whom with the Father of Lights and Spirit of Grace, be Eternity of Praiſe and Honour.*

SER-

SERMON VI.

PREFACE.

WHAT *ſhall it profit a Man, if he gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul,* ſaid our Saviour, who was to lay down a Ranſom for it, and knew well that it would coſt infinitely more than the World was worth. Yet the moſt of Men value their own Souls at a far lower Rate than the whole World, loſing them for broken Morſels of it; yea, many times for vain Hopes that are never accompliſhed. And as theſe Men make a miſerable Bargain, ſo, by the contrary, they that loſe the World, or any thing worldly, yea, tho' it were the whole, to ſave their Souls, make a profitable Loſs of it. Nature teaches Men to hazard and loſe all for the Life of the Body, rather than loſe it, (although it prove many Times very uncomfortable by the Loſs of theſe outward Things) and yet the moſt part of Men paſs their whole Lifetime without one ſerious Thought of the Excellency and Importance of their Souls, whoſe Life and Happineſs is of a higher Nature, and neither conſiſts in, nor depends upon any thing here below. Hence it is, that while they uſe the Helps of this preſent Life, and the Defences of it when it is in Danger, and uſe them with ſo much Diligence and Attention; the Means of that better Life, of their better part, their Souls, they either uſe not at all, or ſo ſlightly and coldly, that they never find Salvation in them. You may find it ſome way in yourſelves, the Threatnings and Preparations of Men againſt you have awakened and rouſed you more to think upon Means of your temporal Safety;

but

but how few are ſenſible and afraid of the Wrath of God, who, as our Saviour tells us, can kill both Body and Soul, and caſt them into Hell. You want not frequent Advertiſement from the Word of God, ſo plentifully preach'd, that many are periſhing; one part in groſs Ignorance of God, another in profane and licentious living, and the greateſt part in a formal and lifeleſs Profeſſion of Religion, without the Power of it: And yet where are they that lay it to heart, and beſtir themſelves to reſcue their Souls from Deſtruction? Certainly whatſoever Men profeſs, it is Unbelief that is the Cauſe of Impenitence. Men are not convinced of the Purity of God's Nature, nor ſenſible of the Impurity of their own, therefore they apply not themſelves in good earneſt to the Work of Repentance, and Reformation, the livelieſt part of it. Labour then for a more active and practical Knowledge of God and divine Truths, ſuch as may humble and renew your Souls; not only that you may be delivered from outward Troubles that threaten you, but much more, that you may eſcape the Wrath to come. And becauſe neither the Word preached, nor Judgments nor Mercies that are ſet before you, are ſufficient to quicken a dead Soul, or ſoften a hard Heart, without the effectual Concourſe of the Spirit of God, let us have Recourſe to the Throne of Grace, by humble and earneſt Prayer, in the Name and Mediation of Jeſus Chriſt.

PSAL. XLII. 8.

Yet the Lord will command his loving Kindneſs in the Day-time, and in the Night his Song ſhall be with me, and my Prayer unto the God of my Life.

MAN is born to Trouble, as the Sparks fly upwards, ſaith *Eliphaz*, Job v. 7. and as it is the Corruption and Sinfulneſs of his Birth and Nature that has

has expoſed him to Trouble, ſo Nature uſually ſets him at work, to look out for ſuch Things as may preſerve and deliver him from Trouble, or, at leaſt, mitigate and temper the Bitterneſs of it. And becauſe there is not any one worldly Thing that hath either Certainty or Sufficiency enough to ſerve at all Times, therefore worldly and natural Men are forced to make uſe of Variety, and are but badly ſerved with them all. The believing Soul hath but one Comfort whereon he relies, but it is a great one, which alone weighs down all the reſt. *Bread ſtrengthens, and Wine makes glad the Heart of Man*, Pſal. civ. 15. *But God is the Strength of my Heart*, (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *Pſal.* lxxiii. 26. and the *Gladneſs* of it too. *Thou haſt put Gladneſs in my Heart, more than they have when their Corn and Wine increaſeth*, Pſal. iv. 7. And therefore, while the reſt are ſeeking after ſome ſcattered Crumbs of Goodneſs in the Creatures, *Who will ſhew us any good?* he fixes his Choice upon this one Thing, *the Light of God's Countenance.* And it is the conſtant Aſſurance of this that upholds him. *Waves beat upon him*, yea, and *go over him, yet the Lord will command his loving Kindneſs to ſhine upon him.*

In this *Pſalm* we may perceive the *Pſalmiſt* full of perplexed Thoughts, and that betwixt ſtrong Deſires and Griefs; and yet, in the midſt of them, now and then, ſome Advantage, and intermixing Strains of Hope, with his ſad Complaints: For, immediately before, we heard nothing but the impetuous Noiſe of many Waters, *Deep calling unto Deep*, in the former Verſe. We have here, as it were, a Touch of the ſweet Sound of *David*'s Harp, *Yet the Lord will command his loving Kindneſs in the Day-time*, &c.

In the Words we have *David*'s *Confidence*, and *David*'s *Purpoſe*; the one ſuiting very well with the other. His *Confidence* in God's loving Kindneſs; *Yet the Lord will command his loving Kindneſs.* And his

Pur-

Purpoſe; *And in the Night his Song ſhall be with me.*

It is true, thoſe Words (*in the Night his Song ſhall be with me*) may be taken as a Part of the Expreſſion of his Confidence, taking his Song for the Matter or Subject of the Song, the *Goodneſs of God*; as if he ſhould ſay, "both in the Day, and in the Night, I "ſhall find the ſweet Fruits of God's Favour and "loving Kindneſs." But not excluding that, I rather take it intended, as his *Reſolution*, that it ſhould be his Cuſtom, in the quiet Seaſon of the Night, to look back upon God's Goodneſs manifeſted to him in the Actions and Occurences of the Day; and thus entertaining his Soul with that ſecret Diſcourſe, he would ſtir it up to the Praiſes of his God, and withal, would join Prayer for the Continuance, and further Manifeſtation of it. *David* (as is hinted before) intermixes Strains of Hope, not that faint and common Hope of *Poſſibility* or *Probability*, that after ſtormy Days it may be better with him, but a *certain Hope* that ſhall never make *aſhamed*; ſuch a *Hope* as ſprings from *Faith*, yea, in Effect, is one with it. Faith reſts upon the Goodneſs and Truth of him that hath promiſed, and Hope raiſing itſelf upon Faith ſo eſtabliſhed, ſtands up and looks out to the future Accompliſhment of the Promiſe. Therefore the Apoſtle, *Heb.* xi. 1. calls Faith *the Subſtance of things hoped for*, ὑπόστασις, *and the Evidence of Things not ſeen*; of all other *wavering* Hope, is here, they ſay, *true*. *Spes eſt nomen boni incerti*, but this can ſay, *the Lord will command his loving Kindneſs*, &c.

The Lord will command] What a ſudden Change is here! Would you think this were the ſame Man that was even now almoſt overwhelmed? Thus Faith always conquers, tho' ſeldom or never, without hard Conflict, not only aſſaulted by Troubles without, but, which is worſe, by Incredulity within: Nor aſſaulted only, but many Times brought under, yet does

does it not ſuccumb and give over, knowing, that even after many Foils, yet in the End it ſhall overcome.

His *Confidence* you may conſider, firſt, *oppoſitely*, and then *poſitively*, or ſimply in itſelf. Oppoſitely both to his preſent Trouble, and to his Complaints, wherein this Trouble is expreſt, and that is fitly implied, tho' it be not in the Original.

Tho' the Multitude and Weight of *Job*'s Afflictions did force out of him ſome bitter Words, and made him look back upon the Day of his Birth, and curſe it; yet Faith recovers him from his Diſtemper, and makes him look forward with Joy, even as far as to the bleſſed Day of his Reſurrection, *Job* xix. 25. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he ſhall ſtand at the latter Day upon the Earth: And tho' after my Skin, Worms deſtroy this Body, yet in my Fleſh ſhall I ſee God.*

The former Words of Impatience he ſpake indeed, but he adheres to *theſe*, and wiſhes that they were *written with an Iron Pen, and engraven to abide for ever.* Therefore we hear of him again in Scripture, as a *righteous* and *patient* Man, but of theſe Words of his *Impatience not a Word.* In the 77th *Pſalm*, what ſad Expoſtulations are theſe the *Pſalmiſt* uſes, *Will he be favourable no more? Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promiſe fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in Anger ſhut up his tender Mercies?* But ſee how he corrects them, *Ver.* 10. *Then I ſaid, this is my Infirmity, but I will remember the Years of the right Hand of the moſt High.* Thus *Jonah*, *Chap.* ii. *Ver.* 3, 4. much like this; but there, literally true. And here *Deep calls unto Deep*, yet in the midſt of thoſe Deeps, Faith is not drowned, you ſee it lifts up its Head above Water; *Yet the Lord will command*, &c. Yea, tho' it takes particular Notice of God's Hand in the Affliction, yet it goes

goes not to another Hand for Comfort. *Thy* Waves and *thy* Billows; yet that ſame God, whoſe Waves are like to deſtroy me, will e're long command *his loving Kindneſs to ſhine upon me. Tho' he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*, Job xiii. 15. A wonderful Expreſſion of Faith! He ſays not, tho' he afflict me ſore, but tho' he *ſlay* me; not tho' evil Men or Satan ſhould do it, but, tho' *he* ſlay me, yet will I truſt in *him*. What troubled Mind can imagine any thing harder againſt itſelf than this?

1. Learn then to check theſe exceſſive Doubts and Fears, by ſome ſuch reſolute Word as this. Turn the Promiſe, firſt upon thyſelf, and then upon God. Conſider that he hath promiſed Life eternal to Believers, and then ſay, "Tho' I ſaw his Hand, as it "were, lift up to deſtroy me, yet from that very "Hand will I expect Salvation; for I have his "Word engaged for it, that if I believe I ſhall be "ſaved." I do not ſay, that a Soul under Temptation can aſſure itſelf, that God is already reconciled to it, (and herein poſſibly lies oftentimes the Miſtake;) for this reflex act of Aſſurance, tho' it be our Duty to ſeek after it, itſelf is rather a Gift and Reward than a Duty. But the direct and proper Act of Faith is of perpetual Uſe and Neceſſity, and then moſt, when there is leaſt Senſe of Aſſurance. And it is no other but a Recumbency or Reliance, rolling over of the Soul upon free Mercy. That which breeds us much Perplexity, is, that we would invert God's Order. "If I knew (ſay ſome) that the Pro-"miſe belonged to me, and Chriſt were a Saviour to "me, I could believe," that is to ſay, would firſt ſee, and then believe. But the true Method is juſt contrary, *I had fainted*, ſays *David*, *unleſs I had believed to ſee the Goodneſs of the Lord*. He believed it firſt, and ſaw it afterwards. And in this ſame *Pſalm*, labour-

ing to ſtill his diſquieted Soul, by elevating it above his Troubles, to look upon his God; he ſays to it, *hope in him now*, and e're it be long, *thou ſhalt praiſe him for the Help of his Countenance*, even while his Countenance is with-held. And thus Faith ought to triumph over ſpiritual Fears and Difficulties.

2. How incongruous is it, that outward Dangers or Trials ſhould over-match it; will you truſt God, upon his Word, for Salvation and eternal Happineſs, and be diffident for the Safety and needful Bleſſings of this temporal Life, which Life, in Compariſon, is but a Moment, and the beſt Things of it but Droſs? Conſider that you diſhonour Faith exceedingly, and degenerate from the believing Saints of former Ages. Indeed, the Promiſes of this Life, and that which concerns it, tho' Godlineſs hath them, yet they are not ſo abſolute, nor are they ſo abſolutely needful for you. But conſidering the Wiſdom and Love of your heavenly Father, learn to compoſe your Minds by it.

I will not be afraid, tho' ten thouſands of the People ſet themſelves againſt me round about, ſays *David*, Pſal. iii. 6. And leſt you think him ſingular, in the 46th *Pſalm*, it is the joint Voice of the whole Church of God, *We will not fear, tho' the Earth be removed, and the Mountains be caſt into the midſt of the Sea: Tho' the Waters thereof roar and be troubled; tho' the Mountains ſhake with the ſwelling thereof. There is a River, the Streams whereof make glad the City of God: The holy Place of the Tabernacle of the moſt high God is in the midſt of her; ſhe ſhall not be moved.* That is the Way to be immoveable in the midſt of Troubles, as a Rock amidſt the Waves. When God is in the midſt of a Kingdom or City, he makes it firm as Mount *Sion*, that cannot be removed. When he is in the midſt of the Soul, tho' Calamities throng about it on all Hands, and roar like the Billows of the

the Sea, yet there is a conſtant Calm within, ſuch a Peace as the World can neither give nor take away. On the other Side, what is it but Want of lodging God in the Soul, and that in his Stead, the World is in the midſt of Mens Hearts, that makes them ſhake like the Leaves of Trees at every Blaſt of Danger? What a Shame is it, ſeeing natural Men, by the Strength of Nature, and Help of moral Precepts, have attained ſuch undaunted Reſolution and Courage againſt outward Changes, yet they that would paſs for Chriſtians, are ſo ſoft and fainting, and ſo ſenſible of the ſmalleſt Alterations? The Advantage that we have in this Regard is infinite; what is the beſt Ground-Work of a Philoſopher's Conſtancy, but as moving Sands in Compariſon of the Rock that we may build upon? But the Truth is, that either we make no Proviſion of Faith for Times of Trial, or if any we have, we neither know the Worth, nor the Uſe of it, but lay it by, as a dead unprofitable thing, when we ſhould moſt uſe and exerciſe it. Notwithſtanding all our frequenting of God's Houſe, and our plauſible Profeſſion, is it not too true, that the moſt of us either do not at all furniſh ourſelves with theſe ſpiritual Arms, that are ſo needful in the militant Life of a Chriſtian, or we learn not how to handle them, and are not in Readineſs for Service? As was the Caſe of that improvident Soldier, whom his Commander found mending ſome Piece of his Armour, when they were to give Battle. It were not amiſs before Afflictions overtake us, to try and train the Mind ſomewhat by ſuppoſing the very worſt and hardeſt of them. To ſay, "What if the Waves "and Billows of Adverſity were ſwelled and flow-"ing in upon me, could I then believe? God hath "ſaid, *I will not fail thee, nor forſake thee*, with a "Heap of Negations, *in no wiſe, I will not.* He "hath ſaid, *when thou paſſeſt through the Fire and*

" *through the Water I will be with thee.* Theſe I " know, and can diſcourſe of them. But could I " repoſe and reſt upon them in the Day of Trial? Put your Souls to it, is there any Thing or Perſon that you eſteem and Love exceedingly; ſay, *what if I ſhould loſe this?* Is there ſome Evil that is naturally more contray and terrible to you than many others? Spare not to preſent that to the Imagination too, and labour to make Faith Maſter of it beforehand in caſe it ſhould befal you, and if the firſt Thought of it ſcar you, look upon it the oftner, till the Viſage of it become familiar to you, that you ſtart and ſcar no more at it. Nor is there any Danger in theſe Thoughts. Troubles cannot be the nearer by thus thinking on them: But you may be both ſafer and ſtronger, by breathing and exerciſing of your Faith in ſuppoſed Caſes. But if you be ſo tender ſpirited, that you cannot look upon Calamities ſo much as in Thought or Fancy, how would you be able for a real Encounter? No, ſure. But the Soul that hath made God his Stay, can do both; ſee it in that notable Reſolution of the Prophet, *Hab.* iii. 17. *Altho' the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall Fruit be in the Vines, the Labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the Fields ſhall yield no Meat, the Flock ſhall be cut off from the Fold, and there ſhall be no Herd in the Stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation. The Lord God is my Strength.* And in *David*, Pſal. xxiii. 4. *Yea*, (ſays he) *tho' I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no Evil, for thou art with me, thy Rod and thy Staff, they comfort me.* You ſee how Faith is as Cork to his Soul, keeping it from ſinking in the Deeps of Afflictions. Yea that big Word which one ſays of his morally juſt Man is true of the Believer, *ſi fractus illabatur orbis, tho' the very Fabrick of the World were falling about him, yet would he ſtand upright,*

right, and undaunted in the midſt of its Ruins.

In this *Confidence* conſidered in itſelf, we may obſerve the *Object* of it; *The loving Kindneſs of the Lord.* 2. The Manner or Way by which he expects to enjoy it; *The Lord will command it.* 3. The Time; *in the Day.*

His loving Kindneſs.] He ſays not, *return to the Houſe of God*, for *Deliverance from the heavy Oppreſſion* and *ſharp Reproaches of the Enemy*, which would have anſwered more particularly and expreſly to his preſent Griefs, but *his loving Kindneſs.* And the Reaſon of thus expreſſing himſelf, I conceive to be twofold. 1. In the Aſſurance of this is neceſſarily compriſed the Certainty of all other good Things. This ſpecial Favour and Benignity of the Lord, doth engage his Power and Wiſdom (both which you know are infinite) to the Procurement of every thing truly good for thoſe whom he ſo favours. Therefore it is, that *David* chuſes rather to name the Streams of particular Mercies in this their living Source and Fountain, than to ſpecify them ſeverally. Nor is it only thus more compendious, but fuller too, which are the two great Advantages of Speech, and this I take to be the other Reaſon. 2. A Man may enjoy great Deliverances, and many poſitive Benefits from the Hand of God, and yet have no Share in his loving Kindneſs. How frequently doth God heap Riches, and Honour, and Health on theſe he hates, and the common Gifts of the Mind too, Wiſdom and Learning, yea the common Gifts of his own Spirit, and gives a fair and long Day of external Proſperity, to thoſe on whom he never vouchſafed the leaſt Glance of his favourable Countenance, yea, on the contrary, gives all thoſe ſpecious Gifts to them with a ſecret Curſe? As here he gave a King in Wrath to his People, ſo he often gives Kingdoms in his Wrath to Kings. Therefore *David* looks higher than the very King-

Kingdom which God promiſed him, and gave him, when he ſpeaks of *his loving Kindneſs*. In a Word, he reſolves to ſolace himſelf with the Aſſurance of this, tho' he was ſtript of all other Comforts, and to quiet his Soul herein, till Deliverance come; and when it ſhall come, and whatſoever Mercies with it, to receive them as Fruits and Effects of this *loving Kindneſs:* Not prizing them ſo much for themſelves, as for the Impreſſions of that Love which is upon them. And it is that Image and Superſcription that both engages and moves him moſt to pay his Tribute of Praiſe. And truly this is every where *David*'s Temper; his frequent Diſtreſſes and Wants never excite him ſo much to deſire any particular Comfort in the Creature, as to intreat the Preſence and Favour of God himſelf. His ſaddeſt Times are, when, to his Senſe, this Favour is eclipſed. *In my Proſperity I ſaid I ſhall not be moved.* And what was his Adverſity that made him of another Mind? *Thou hiddeſt thy Face and I was troubled.* This verifies his Poſition in that ſame Pſalm, *In thy Favour is Life.* Thus in the 63d *Pſal.* at the Beginning, *My Soul thirſteth for thee in a dry Land where there is no Water*; not for Water where there is none, but *for thee where there is no Water.* Therefore he adds in *Verſe* 3d, *Thy loving Kindneſs is better than Life:* And all that be truly wiſe, and of this Mind, will ſubſcribe to his Choice. Let them enjoy this loving Kindneſs and prize it, that whatever befals them, their Happineſs and Joy is above the Reach of all Calamities. Let them be derided and reproached abroad, yet ſtill this inward Perſuaſion makes them glad and contented: As a rich Man ſaid, "Tho' the People hated and taunted him, yet when he came home and looked upon his Cheſts, *Egomet mihi plaudo domi.*" With how much better Reaſon do Believers bear out external Injuries? What inward Contentment, when

when they conſider themſelves truly enriched with the Favour of God. And as this makes them contemn the Contempts that the World puts upon them, ſo likewiſe it breeds in them a Neglect and Diſdain of thoſe poor Trifles that the World admires. The Sum of their Deſires is (as that *Cynick*'s was of the Sun-ſhine) that the Rays of the Love of God may ſhine conſtantly upon them. The favourable Aſpect and large Proffers of Kings and Princes would be unwelcome to them, if they ſhould ſtand betwixt them and the Sight of that Sun: And truly they have Reaſon. What are the higheſt Things the World affords? What are great Honours and great Eſtates, but great Cares and Griefs well dreſt and coloured over with a ſhew of Pleaſure, that promiſe Contentment, and perform nothing but Vexation? That they are not ſatisfying, is evident; for the obtaining of much of them doth but ſtretch the Appetite, and teach Men to deſire more. They are not ſolid neither. Will not the Pains of a Gout, of a Strangury, or ſome ſuch Malady (to ſay nothing of the worſt, the Pains of a guilty Conſcience) blaſt all theſe Delights? What Reliſh finds a Man in large Revenues and ſtately Buildings, in high Preferments and honourable Titles, when either his Body or Mind is in Anguiſh? And beſides the Emptineſs of all theſe Things, you know they want one main Point, *Continuance.* But the loving Kindneſs of God hath all Requiſites to make the Soul happy. *O ſatisfy us early with thy Goodneſs, (or Mercy)* ſays *Moſes, that we may rejoice and be glad all our Days*, Pſ. xc. 14. There is *Fulneſs* in that for the vaſteſt Deſires of the Soul, *ſatisfy us*; there is *ſolid Contentment*, that begets true *Joy and Gladneſs*; and there is *Permanency, all our Days.* It is the only Comfort of this Life, and Aſſurance of a better. This were a large Subject to inſiſt on, but certainly the naming of *his loving*

ving Kindneſs ſhould beget in each Heart an high Eſteem of it, an ardent Deſire after it. And if it do ſo with you, then know that it is only to be found in the Way of Holineſs. He is a holy God, and can love nothing that's altogether unlike himſelf. There muſt always be ſome Similitude and Conformity of Nature to ground Kindneſs and Friendſhip, and to maintain it. That Saying is true, *Idem velle & idem nolle, firma amicitia.* What groſs Self-flattery is it, to think that God's loving Kindneſs can be towards you, while you are in Love with Sin, which he ſo perfectly hates? How can the profane Swearer or voluptuous Perſon, or the Oppreſſor and Covetous, or the cloſe Hypocrite, (worſe than any of them) reſt upon the loving Kindneſs of the Lord in the Day of Troubles? No ſure. But the Terror of his Wrath ſhall be added to all their other Calamities; and they ſhall find it heavier than all the reſt. God will not pour this precious Oil of Gladneſs, this Perſuaſion of his Love, into filthy Veſſels. Even his own Children, when they grieve and ſadden his holy Spirit by Unholineſs, ſhall be ſadly puniſhed by the withdrawing of theſe comforting and ſenſible Expreſſions of his Love.

Labour then you, that as yet never taſted of this Love, to know what it means. Forſake and hate that which hitherto have made you Strangers to it; for if you obtain this, it ſhall comfort you when theſe Things cannot, but would rather prove your greateſt Torment. And you that have received any Teſtimonies of it, entertain it carefully, for it is your beſt Comfort both in your beſt Days, and in your worſt Days too.

You would all gladly be delivered from theſe many Evils that threaten you; for many they be indeed, and Peace is a great Bleſſing. But ſuppoſe you were ſecured from all theſe Fears, and he ſhould command

command a ſudden Calm, (which truly he can do) would you then think yourſelves happy? That Life of yours which you ſo fear to loſe by Fire or Sword, tho' you had Peace, would e're long fall into the Hands of ſome Ague, or Fever, or Conſumption, and periſh by them, or at the longeſt, a few Years will end it: It is a lighted Candle, that tho' no Body blow out, will quickly burn out of itſelf. But this loving Kindneſs is not ſo ſhort-lived, it ſhall laſt as long as your Souls; and ſo long as it laſts, they ſhall be happy. Thoſe Goods that you fear ſhall be pillaged and ſpoiled in War, how many Hazards are they ſubject to even in Peace? *Solomon* tells you, *That Riches oftentimes* (tho' no Body take them away) *make themſelves Wings, and fly away.* And truly many times the undue ſparing of them is but the letting of their Wings grow, which makes them readier to fly away; and the contributing a part of them to do Good, only clips their Wings a little, and makes them ſtay the longer with their Owner: But this by the Way. Howſoever, *in the Day of Death, and in the Day of Wrath*, as *Solomon* ſays, *they profit nothing at all*, Prov. xi. 4. So then tho' you may deſire that God would command Deliverance for you; yet, if you would be truly happy, your greater and more earneſt Suit would be, that he command his *loving Kindneſs* to appear to your Souls. And having once obtained this, you may poſſibly be perſecuted, and endure hard Trials, but one thing is made ſure, you cannot be miſerable: Nor ſhall you want temporal Mercies and Preſervation too, ſo far as they are good for you. The inward Aſſurance of this Love ſhall carry you ſtrangely and ſweetly through all outward Viciſſitudes; and when the Day ſhall come, that all other Comforts ſhall look pale upon you, then ſhall you find the Worth and Happineſs of this more than ever before.

Command] Make it appear to me. Sometimes God is ſaid to ſhut up and hide his Love from his Children, and that is a mournful Time with them. But we read not that he ſhuts out *Love*, and ceaſeth altogether to have Affection to thoſe whom once he loved. And therefore when he ſhews himſelf again in the gracious Manifeſtations of his Mercy, he is not ſaid to begin anew to love them, but only to command his Love, which e're while he had countermanded to appear.

In the Day] If you have a Mind to take the *Day* and *Night* figuratively, for proſperous and adverſe Times, it would lead you, in that Senſe, to obſerve *David*'s Conſtancy in God's Praiſes, that not only in the Day of Deliverance, but even in the Night of Diſtreſs, he reſolved a Song for God. And truly many times God gives his Children in an afflicted Condition, more Sweetneſs of Spirit, and Aptitude, not only to pray, but to praiſe; and more ſpiritual Delight in himſelf, than in times of outward Peace and Proſperity. *He giveth Songs in the Night*, ſaith *Job*; and you know the Sound of Muſick is moſt delightful in the Night. But to take it properly, he is confident that in the ſeveral Actions and Occurrences of the Day he ſhould find the *Goodneſs and favourable Aſſiſtance* of the Lord, and then he reſolves. Which leads to the other Part of the Text, *In the Night-time to meditate on that Goodneſs, and frame a Song of Praiſe to the Author of it.*

And indeed what is the whole Thread of our Life but a checkered Twiſt, black and white, of Delights and Dangers interwoven? And the happieſt paſſing of it, is conſtantly to enjoy, and to obſerve the Experiences of God's Goodneſs, and to praiſe him for them. *David* was a wiſe King, and withal a valiant Soldier, and yet we ſee he thought not this Experience inconſonant with either of theſe two Conditions.

This

This precious Book of *Pſalms* (a great part thereof being his) teſtifies clearly, that Prayer and Praiſes were his great Employment. A religious Diſpoſition of Mind may not only conſiſt with Fortitude and Magnanimity, but is indeed the beſt Principle and Cauſe of both, contrary to the wicked and fooliſh Opinion of profane Perſons. Whether of the two, do you think, might welcome a Day of Battle with moſt Courage and Reſolution, he that had paſt the preceeding Night in revelling and carouſing, or he that had ſpent it in Prayer, and obtained ſome Aſſurance of a better Life? Truly if they went on with equal Forwardneſs, there is no Man, except he were an Atheiſt, but would judge the one to be brutiſh Fury and Precipitation, and the other true Valour.

His Song] In the worſt Eſtate there is ever ſome Matter of Praiſe to be mixed with Requeſt; and truly we may juſtly ſuſpect that our Neglect of Praiſes makes our Prayers unacceptable.

And my Prayer] In the beſt Eſtate here below, Praiſe muſt be accompanied with Prayer. Our Wants and Neceſſities, and Straits, return daily upon us, and require new Supplies of Mercy; and Prayer, if we know how to uſe it right, is the Way to obtain them all.

To the God of my Life] Or *the God that is my Life.* This Word is added, as the Reaſon of all that went before. If you ask *David*, why he repoſeth ſo much upon the loving Kindneſs of God? what he means to ſpend ſo much Pains in Praiſes and Prayer to God? He anſwers, "*Becauſe he is my Life.* He is the Au-
"thor and Preſerver of my temporal Life; and all
"the Paſſages and Accidents of it are in his Hand
"alone: He hath alſo given me, and he maintains
"in me a ſpiritual Life, yea he is the Life of my
"Soul; it lives by Union with him, as my Body
"does by Union with it, and he hath laid up Life

" eternal for me." Would Chriſtians think thus indeed, the Light of this Conſideration would diſpel their diſtruſtful Fears. Certainly there is Atheiſm at the Bottom of them; if not a Denial nor a Miſconceit of God, at leaſt a Forgetfulneſs of God. See *Iſa.* li. 12, 13. *I, even I am he that comforteth you: Who art thou, that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of a Man that ſhall die, and of the Son of Man, which ſhall be made as Graſs, and forgetteſt the Lord thy Maker, that hath ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth*, &c. Conſider then that Men have no Power of our preſent Life, but by the Appointment of God. And beſide that we have another Life, which is infinitely more precious than this, a Life ſpiritual, and which is the Beginning of eternal Life; and this is altogether out of their Danger, *Col.* iii. 3. *Our Life is hid with Chriſt in God. It is hid*, and wicked Men cannot ſo much as ſee it: How then ſhould they take it from us, ſeeing it is *hid*, and that not meanly, it is *hid with Chriſt in God?* What then ſhall become of it? Read the next Verſe, and read it to your Comfort, for there is Abundance in it, if you look right upon it, *When Chriſt who is our Life ſhall appear, we likewiſe ſhall appear with him in Glory.* They that are in God, being united to him through Chriſt, can never by any Power be ſeparated from him. It is an indiſſoluble Union: Death itſelf, that is the great Diſſolver of all other Unions civil and natural, is ſo far from untying this, that it conſummates it; it conveys the Soul into the neareſt and fulleſt Enjoyment of God, who is its Life, where it ſhall not need to deſire that God would *command* or *ſend his loving Kindneſs*, as it were at a Diſtance, it ſhall be then at the Spring-head, and ſhall be ſatisfied with his Love for ever, &c.

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SERMON VII.

PREFACE.

WHEREFORE *do you ſpend Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which ſatisfies not?* ſays the Prophet *Iſa.* lv. 2. All Men agree in this, that they would willingly meet with ſome ſatisfying Good; and yet if you look right upon the Projects and Labours of the greateſt Part, you ſhall find them flying from it, and taking much Pains to be miſerable. And truly conſidering the Darkneſs that is upon the Soul of Man, it is no great Wonder to ſee theſe miſs their Way, and continue wandring, that hear not the Voice of the Goſpel to recall them, and ſee not its Light to direct them. But this is ſomewhat ſtrange, that where true Happineſs, and the true Way to it, is propounded and ſet before Men, ſo few ſhould follow it in good Earneſt. If the Excellency of that Good did not allure them, yet one would think that their many Diſappointments in all other things ſhould drive them home to it. How often do we run ourſelves out of Breath after Shadows? and when we think we have overtaken them, and would lay hold on them, we find nothing. And yet ſtill we love to beſool ourſelves, even againſt our own Experience, which we ſay, uſes to make Fools wiſer. Still we chuſe rather to ſhift from one Vanity to another, than to return to that *ſovereign Good*, that alone can fill the vaſteſt Deſires of our Souls; rather to run from one *broken Ciſtern to another*, as the Prophet calls them, yea and to take Pains to hew them out, than have Recourſe to that *Fountain of living Waters*,

ters. One main thing that makes Men thus rove and wander is, that they do not reflect upon their own Courſe nor themſelves, what is the main End they aim at, and then ſee whether their Way be ſuitable to that End. If they would be happy (as who would not) then ſure things that are empty, and uncertain, and certainly periſhing, will not ſerve the Turn. And truly as this Thought would be ſeaſonable at any Time, ſo eſpecially to us in theſe Times wherein, beſides the common Uncertainty of outward things, there is an apparent viſible Hazard that Mens Lives and Fortunes are likely to be put to. Will you make Advantage and Gain of your Trouble? Thus, the looſer you find other things tied to you, and as it were upon a running Knot, ſecure that one thing, and your Portion in it, which is worth all the reſt, yea far above them all, and that alone which can be ſecured, and made certain. Wanting this, what though you had Peace and Health, and all imaginable Proſperity, you would ſtill be miſerable, being liable to the Wrath of God, and eternal Deſtruction. But if once united to Chriſt, and in him reconciled to God, and entitled to Heaven, what can fall amiſs to you? You ſhall have Joy in the midſt of Sorrow and Affliction, and Peace in the midſt of War, yea and Life in Death. But think not to attain this Aſſurance, while you continue profane and godleſs, not ſeeking it in the Way of Holineſs, for there alone it is to be found, and withal beg it of God by humble Prayer.

PSALM CXIX. 136.

Rivers of Waters run down mine Eyes: Becauſe they keep not thy Law.

LOve is the leading Paſſion of the Soul, all the reſt follow the Meaſure and Motion of it, as the

the lower Heavens are ſaid to be wheel'd about with the firſt.

We have here a clear Inſtance of it in the Pſalmiſt, teſtifying his Love to God, by his Eſteem and Love of the Law or Word of God. What is each of the ſeveral Verſes of this Pſalm but a ſeveral Breathing, and Vent of this Love, either in itſelf, or in the Cauſes, or in the Effects of it? Where he ſets forth the Excellencies and Utilities of God's Law, there you have the *Cauſes* of his Love; his obſerving and ſtudying it, his Deſire to know it more, and obſerve it better, theſe are the *Effects* of his Affection to it. The Love itſelf he often expreſſeth, *Ver.* 47, 48, 113. and *Ver.* 140. *Thy Word is pure, therefore thy Servant loveth it*, and *Ver.* 127. *I love thy Commandments above Gold, yea above fine Gold.* But as ſcarce accounting that Love which can be uttered how much it is, *Ver.* 97. he expreſſeth it moſt, by intimating that he cannot expreſs it; *O how I Love thy Law!* Hence are his Deſires (which are Love in Purſuit) ſo earneſt after it. Amongſt many, that is pathetical, *Ver.* 20. *My Soul breaketh for the Longing that it hath unto thy Judgments at all Times.* Hence likewiſe his Joy and Delight, (which are Love in Poſſeſſion) *Ver.* 14. *I have rejoiced in the Way of thy Teſtimonies as in all Riches*; and *Ver.* 16. *I will delight myſelf in thy Statutes*; *I will not forget thy Word.* We have his Hatred of Things oppoſite, which is Love's Antipathy, *Ver.* 113. *I hate vain Thoughts: But thy Law do I love.* And 163 *Ver. I hate and abhor Lying: But thy Law do I love.* And in the 139 *Ver.* you ſhall find his Zeal, (which is no other but the Fire of Love ſtirred up or blown into a Flame) *My Zeal hath conſumed me: Becauſe mine Enemies have forgotten thy Words.* And (to omit the reſt) in the 158 *Ver.* his Love to the Law ſhews its Sympathy in Sorrow, for the Violation of the Law, *I beheld the Tranſgreſſors,*

and

and was grieved: Becauſe they kept not thy Word. And here you find this Grief ſwelling to ſuch a Height, that it runs over into abundant Tears. *Rivers of Waters run down mine Eyes; becauſe they keep not thy Law.*

The Words have briefly, *theſe Rivers*, in their *Channel* and *Courſe*, *They run down mine Eyes*; in their *Spring and Cauſe*, to wit, his Sympathy with God's Law broken by Men, in the latter Clauſe of the Verſe, *Becauſe they keep not thy Law.* But both together clearly teach us, *That godly Men are affected with deep Sorrow for the Sins of the ungodly.*

More particularly conſider, (1.) The Object of this Affection. (2.) The Nature of it. (3.) The Degree or Meaſure of it. (4.) Its Subject.

I. The *Object* is the Tranſgreſſion of the Law, or to take it (as in the Text) in *concreto*, Men Tranſgreſſors of the Law. *They keep not thy Law.* It is true, the whole Creation groaneth under the Burden of Sin in Effects of it, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks; but Sin itſelf, is Man's Enemy, he being that reaſonable Creature to whom the Law was given. Now in the general, it is Matter of Grief to a godly Mind, to conſider the univerſal Depravedneſs of Man's Nature; that he is a *Tranſgreſſor from the Womb*; that *the carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God, not ſubject to his Law, neither*, while it remains ſuch, *can it be*, *Rom.* viii. 6. And this Grief will go the deeper, by remembring from whence he is fallen. When he was new come forth of the Hands of his Maker, that Image of God that he ſtamped upon him, ſhined bright in his Soul: The whole Frame of it was regular and comely, the inferior Faculties obeying the higher, and all of them ſubject unto God. But how ſoon was he ſeduced, and then what a great Change enſued? *Quantum mutatus ab illo?* There is ever ſince ſuch a Tumult and Confuſion in the Soul, that it cannot hear

hear the Voice of God's Law, much leſs obey and keep it. Hence is that Complaint of the Pſalmiſt oftner than once, *They are all gone out of the Way, and become abominable, there is none that doth Good, no not one.* Mundus immundus ἐν ἀδικίᾳ κεῖται *lies buried in it*, as the Word is uſed in the Inſcription of Tombs ἐνθάδε κεῖται. Look abroad in the World, and what ſhall ye ſee, but a Sea of Wickedneſs over the Face of the whole, which draws from a godly diſcerning Eye that beholds it, theſe Rivers of Tears? The greateſt Part not knowing the true God, nor the true Religion, and the true Way of his Worſhip. And for thoſe that do, yet how unlike are they to it in their Lives! The reformed Churches this Way, how unreformed in a great Part!

But more particularly to branch this out a little in ſeveral Sorts of Men; this godly Grief is a very large Sphere, it will extend to remote People, remote every way, not only in Place, but in Manners and Religion, even to Heathens and groſs Idolaters. Yea, the very Sins of Enemies, and of ſuch as are profeſt Enemies to God, yet moves the tender-hearted Chriſtian to Sorrow and Compaſſion. *Of whom I now tell you weeping, that they are Enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt*, Philip. iii. 18. *Enemies*, and yet he ſpeaks of them *weeping*. What he writes concerning them he would have written in Tears, if that had been legible. Thus you ſee the *Extenſion* of this Grief. But yet, out of all Queſtion, it will be more *intenſive* in Particulars of nearer Concernment. It is the Burden of the pious Man's Heart, that His Law who made the World, and gives Being to all Things, ſhould be ſo little regarded, and ſo much broken through all the World; but yet more eſpecially that in his own Church amongſt his own People, Tranſgreſſion ſhould abound. Sins within the Church are moſt properly Scandals, God manifeſts himſelf (ſo

to ſpeak) moſt ſenſible of thoſe, and therefore the godly Man is ſo too. Whether they be the continual Enormities of licentious and profane Perſons, which are by external Profeſſion in the Face of the viſible Church, though indeed they be in it, but, as *Spots* and *Blemiſhes*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks: Or whether it be the Apoſtacy of Hypocrites, or (which ſometimes falls out) the groſs Falls of true Converts. All theſe are the great Grief of the Godly. The Relations of Men either natural or civil will add ſomething too. This Sorrow will be greater than ordinary in a Chriſtian, he will melt in a particular Tenderneſs for the Sins of his Kindred, Parents or Children, Husband or Wife; and moſt of all, Miniſters for their People. How pathetically does this appear in St. *Paul*, 2 *Cor.* xii. 21. *And leſt when I come again my God will humble me among you, and that I ſhall bewail many which have ſinned already, and have not repented of the Uncleanneſs and Fornication, and Laſciviouſneſs, which they have committed.* A Man cannot but be more particularly touched with the Sins of that Nation, and of that City, and Congregation, and Family, whereof he is a Member, 2 *Pet.* ii. 8. *For that righteous Man dwelling among them, in ſeeing and hearing, vexed his righteous Soul, from Day to Day, with their unlawful Deeds.* The Sins of more eminent Perſons, either in Church or Commonwealth, will moſt affect a prudent Chriſtian, becauſe their Inclinations and Actions import the Publick much. Therefore the Apoſtle, when he had exhorted to Supplications and Prayers for all Men, he particularly mentions *Kings*, and *ſuch as are in Authority*. And truly, when they are abuſed by Miſadvice and corrupt Counſel, ſome of theſe Tears were very well ſpent, if poured forth before God in their Behalf; for *in his Hand* (as that wiſe King confeſſeth) *are their Hearts, compared to Rivers of Waters.* Let their

Motion

Motion be never ſo impetuous, yet *he turns them whither he pleaſeth.* And who knows but theſe Rivers of Waters, theſe Tears, may prevail with the Lord to reduce the violent Current of that River (a King's Heart) from the wrong Channel?

II. But to proceed: The ſecond Thing to be conſidered in this Affection, is the *Nature* of it. (1.) It is not a Stoical Apathy, and affected Careleſſneſs, much leſs a delightful partaking with ſinful Practices. (2.) Not a proud ſetting off their own Goodneſs, with marking the Sin of others, as the *Phariſee* did in the Goſpel. (3.) Not the Deriſion and Mocking of the Folly of Men, with that *laughing Philoſopher*; it comes nearer to the Temper of the *other* that *wept* always for it. It is not a bitter, bilious Anger, breaking forth into Railings and Reproaches, nor an upbraiding Inſultation. Nor is it a vindictive Deſire of Puniſhment, venting itſelf in Curſes and Imprecations, which is the raſh Temper of many, but eſpecially of the vulgar Sort. The Diſciples Motion to Chriſt was far different from that Way, and yet he ſays to them, *You know not of what Spirit ye are.* They thought they had been of *Elias* his Spirit, but he told them they were miſtaken, and did not know of what a Spirit they were in that Motion. Thus heady Zeal often miſtakes and flatters itſelf. We find not here a Deſire of Fire to come down from Heaven upon the Breakers of the Law, but ſuch a Grief as would rather bring Water to quench it, if it were falling on them. *Rivers of Waters*, &c.

III. The *Degree* of this Sorrow, it is vehement, not a light, tranſient Diſlike, but a deep Reſentment, ſuch as cauſeth not ſome few Sighs, or ſome Drops of Tears, but Rivers *. It is true, the *Meaſure and Degree* of Sorrow for Sin, whether their own or others, are different in divers Perſons, that are yet true Mourners,

* *Palge maijim. Pelagus aquarum.*

and they are alſo different in the ſame Perſon, at divers Times, not only upon the Difference of the Cauſe, but even where the Cauſe is equal, upon the different Influence and Working of the Spirit of God. Sometimes it pleaſeth him to warm and melt the Heart more abundantly, and ſo he raiſes theſe Rivers, in theſe Eyes, to a higher Tide than ordinary. Sometimes they remove again, but yet this godly Sorrow is always ſerious and ſincere; and that is the other Quality here remarkable in it. It is not a hiſtrionical Weeping, only in publick; for the Speech is here directed to God, as a more frequent Witneſs of theſe Tears than any other, who is always the Witneſs of the Sincerity of them, even when they cannot be hid from the Eyes of Men; (for I deny not but they may and ſhould have Vent in publick, eſpecially at ſuch Times as are ſet a-part for ſolemn Mourning and Humiliation.) Yet, even then, uſually theſe Streams run deepeſt, where they are ſtilleſt and moſt quietly conveyed. But howſoever, ſure they would not be fewer, and leſs frequent alone, than in Company, for that is a little ſubject to Suſpicion, *Jer.* ix. 1. *Oh that my Head were Waters, and mine Eyes a Fountain of Tears, that I might weep Day and Night for the ſlain of the Daughter of my People.* And xiii. 17. *But if ye will not hear it, my Soul ſhall weep in ſecret Places for your Pride, and mine Eye ſhall weep ſore, and run down with Tears, becauſe the Lord's Flock is carried away captive.*

IV. The *Subject* of this Affection is, not the Ungodly themſelves that are profeſt Tranſgreſſors of this Law, they rather make *a Sport of Sin*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks; they play and make themſelves merry with it, as the *Philiſtines* did with *Sampſon*, till it bring the Houſe down about their Ears: But the Godly are they that are affected with this Sorrow, ſuch as are careful Obſervers of the Law themſelves,

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and mourn firſt for their own Breaches, for theſe are the only fit Mourners for the Tranſgreſſion of others.

Now to enquire a little into the *Cauſe* of this, Why the breaking of God's Law ſhould cauſe ſuch Sorrow in the Godly, as here breaketh forth into Abundance of Tears; we ſhall find it very reaſonable if we conſider, 1. The Nature of Sin, which is the Tranſgreſſion or Breach of the Law, as the Apoſtle defines it. 2. The Nature of this Sorrow and theſe Tears. 3. The Nature of the Godly.

1. Sin is the greateſt Evil in the World, yea, truly, in compariſon, it alone is worth the Name of *Evil*, and therefore may juſtly challenge Sorrow, and the greateſt Sorrow. The greateſt of Evils it is; both *formally*, in that it alone is the Defilement and Deformity of the Soul; and *cauſally*, being the Root from whence all other Evils ſpring; the fruitful Womb that conceives and brings forth all thoſe Miſeries that either Man feels, or hath Cauſe to fear. Whence are all thoſe perſonal Evils incident to Men in their Eſtates, or in their Bodies, or Minds, outward Turmoils and Diſeaſes, and inward Diſcontents, and Death itſelf, in all the Kinds of it; are they not all the Fruits of that bitter Root? Whence ariſe theſe publick Miſeries of nations and Kingdoms, but from the epidemick National Sins of the People, as the deſerving and procuring Cauſe at God's Hand? And withal, oftentimes from the ambitious and wicked Practices of ſome particular Men, as the working and effecting Cauſes: So that every way, if we follow theſe Evils home to their Original, we ſhall find it to be Sin, or the breaking of God's Law. Ungodly Men, tho' they meddle not with publick Affairs at all, yea, tho' they be faithful and honeſt in meddling with them, yet by reaſon of their impious Lives, are Traitors to their Nation; they

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are truly the Incendiaries of States and Kingdoms. And theſe Mourners, tho' they can do no more, are the loyaleſt and moſt ſerviceable Subjects, bringing Tears to quench the Fire of Wrath, *Rivers of Waters*. And therefore, Sorrow and Tears are not only moſt due to Sin, as the greateſt of Evils, but they are beſt beſtowed upon it, if they can do any thing to its Redreſs, becauſe that is both the ſureſt and moſt compendious Way to remedy all the reſt, Sin being the Source and Spring of them all.

This is the Reaſon why *Jeremiah*, ix. 1. when he would weep for the *Slain* of his People, is ſtraightway led from that to bewail the *Sin* of his People, *Ver.* 2, 3, *&c.* And in his Book of *Tears* and *Lamentations*, he often reduces all theſe ſad Evils to Sin as cauſing them, particularly *Chap.* v. 16. *The Crown is fallen from our Head, wo unto us that we have ſinned.* He turns the Complaint more to the Sin than to the Affliction.

2. Conſider the Nature of theſe Tears. Tears ſpent for worldly Croſſes are all loſt; they run all to waſte; they are *lachrymæ inanes*, empty fruitleſs Things: But Tears ſhed for the Breach of God's Law, are the Means to quench God's Wrath. The Prayers and Tears of ſome few, may avert the Puniſhment of many, yea, of a whole Land; and if not ſo, yet are they not loſt, the Mourners themſelves have always Benefit by them, as you have it in that known Place, *Ezek.* ix. They that mourned for the common Abominations were *marked*, and the common Deſolation took not hold on them. This mourning for other Mens Wickedneſs, both teſtifies and preſerves the godly Man's Innocence. I ſay, it preſerves it, as well as teſtifies it; it keeps them from the Contagion of that bad Air they live in; for without this, Sin would ſoon grow familiar. It is good for Men to keep up, and maintain in their Souls

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a Diſlike of Sin; for when once it ceaſeth to be diſpleaſing to a Man, it will, e're long, begin to be pleaſing to him.

3. If we conſider the Nature of the Godly, we ſhall ſee this Mourning ſuit with it exceedingly, both in regard of his Relation to God, and to Man. God is his Father, and therefore it cannot but grieve him much to ſee him offended and diſhonoured. Love to God, and conſequently to his Law, and Love to Men, and Deſire of their Good, is the Spring of theſe *Rivers*. A godly Man is tender of God's Glory and of his Law; every Stroke that it receives, ſtriketh his Heart: And he hath Bowels of Compaſſion to Men, and would be glad if they were converted and ſaved. He conſiders every Man as his Brother, and therefore is ſorrowful to ſee him run the Hazard of periſhing in Sin. The former Sympathy, whereby the godly Man tenders the Glory of God, is from his Piety: This latter, whereby he pities the Miſery of Man, is from his Charity; and from theſe flow the *Rivers that run down his Eyes.*

To be too ſenſible of worldly Croſſes, and prodigal of Tears, upon ſuch ſlight Occaſions, is little better than childiſh or womaniſh; but theſe Tears, that flow from Love to God, and Grief for Sin, have neither Uncomelineſs nor Exceſs in them. Abundance of them will beſeem any Man that is a Chriſtian. Let profane Men judge it a Weakneſs to weep for Sin, yet we ſee *David* do it. Men of Arms and Valour need not fear Diſparagement by weeping thus; it is the trueſt Magnanimity to be ſenſible of the Point of God's Honour, which is injured by Sin.

Again, The Conſideration of this Truth will diſcover the World guilty of very much Ingratitude to godly Men. It hath always been the Cuſtom of profane Perſons, to ſeek to brand Religion and Godlineſs with Diſloyalty and Turbulency, and to make

it

it paſs for an Enemy to the Peace and Proſperity of States and Kingdoms. You ſee clearly with what Affection Religion furniſhes Men towards the Publick, cauſing them to mourn for common Sins, and ſo to prevent, as far as in them lies, common Calamities. And this is of no little Conſequence; for truly it is not foreign Power, ſo much as Sin at home, that ruins Kingdoms. All the Winds that blow without the Earth, be they never ſo violent, ſtir it not, only that which is within its own Bowels makes an Earthquake. It was a grave Anſwer of *Epaminondas*, being asked what he was doing ſolitary and penſive in the Time of ſolemn Mirth and Feaſting? *While my Countrymen* (ſays he) *are ſo peaceably feaſting, I am thinking on the beſt Means to preſerve that Peace to them, that it may continue.* Which, a little altered, is applicable to the Godly. They are oftentimes mourning for the Sins, and praying for the Peace of the Places where they live; when, in the mean time, the greateſt Part are multiplying Sin, and ſo forfeiting their Peace.

Rivers of Waters] "This is a mournful, melancho-"ly Life that theſe Preciſians lead," ſays the Worldling. Yes, truly, if there were no more in it than what he can perceive and judge of. But beſides the full Joy laid up for them, and the Beginnings of it here, there is even in this Mourning an unknown Sweetneſs and Delight. The Philoſopher ſays, even of common Tears, that there is ſome Kind of Pleaſure in them, as ſome Things pleaſe the Taſte by their very Tartneſs. But of theſe Tears, they that know them, know it to be eminently true, that they are pleaſant. But be this Exerciſe as ſad as the Profane call it, yet why obſerve they not, that they themſelves are much the Cauſe of it, as they may read here, *Becauſe they keep not God's Law?*

But to paſs by divers Inferences that the Words afford,

afford, let us take notice of the Duty here practiſed, and how much we are all obliged to the preſent Practice of it. Who will deny that we have too much Matter and Occaſions of it? Beſides the Sorrow of *Sion*, and particularly the Blood-ſhedding and Diſtreſs of our Brethren, and our own Danger, what Corner of the Land, what Rank or Condition of People is there that abounds not in groſs and hainous Violation of God's Law? *They keep not thy Law.* Magiſtrates and Judges turning Judgment into Gall and Wormwood: Miniſters remiſs in that great Care, the Care of Souls: People wallowing in Ungodlineſs and Uncleanneſs, Swearing, *&c.* The greater oppreſſing the leſs, and the leſs defrauding and wronging the greater. No ſenſible and notable Work of Converſion almoſt to be ſeen or heard of amongſt us, the Lord abſenting himſelf from his Ordinances. O that he would dwell in his Houſe, and fill it with a Cloud of his Glory!

What vile Uncleanneſs and Wantonneſs! What ſhameful Drunkenneſs and Exceſs! And ſome ſo far from mourning for others Guiltineſs of this Sin, that they glory in making others guilty of it, and count it a Paſtime to make others drunk. And this is a far greater Sin than Drunkenneſs itſelf; for theſe Men, while they make Beaſts of their Companions, they make Devils of themſelves, becoming Tempters and Provokers to Sin. If any ſuch be here, either tremble at the Wo that the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *Chap.* ii. denounceth, or confeſs that you believe not the Scriptures: *Wo to him that gives his Neighbour Drink, and puts the Bottle to him to make him drunken. The Cup of the Lord's Right Hand ſhall be turned to thee;* it is full of heavy Vengeance. There is a Cup, if you like it, to pay you home the Cups you give to others.

Again: How is the Land filled with Oaths and

Curſings? How are your Streets, and almoſt all Companies where a Man can come, defiled, partly with tearing the precious Name of God, partly with calling on the Devil. There would be no End of reckoning up all Particulars; Sabbath-breaking, Fraud and Covetouſneſs, Pride and Malice, and Envyings one of another, and the reſt. But the Sum is this, an univerſal Want of the Fear of God and his Law.

And the Cauſe of this is, in a great part, Ignorance of God and of his Law; and truly it is wonderful, under ſo much Light and ſuch plentiful Preaching, to find ſo much Darkneſs, not only in the Skirts and remote Places, but even in the prime Parts of this Land. Multitudes that are Strangers to the very Principles and Fundamentals of that Religion which they profeſs; and they that have Knowledge, abuſing it and ſinning againſt it, continuing in Profaneneſs. And without this true Religion, it is as impoſſible to have renewed Hearts and Lives, as to have a Houſe without a Foundation, or, as we ſay, a Caſtle in the Air. And this Atheiſm and Ignorance amongſt People, is in a great part to be imputed to the Corruption and Sloth of Miniſters: And would to God there were not many Congregations, not only altogether deſtitute, but ſuch as are freezing under a cold and lifeleſs Miniſtry!

You ſee then, we want not Cauſes of Mourning and Humiliation, on all hands; but our Want is inward, of that due Diſpoſition for it, *Softneſs of Heart*, and that *Love to God* which ſhould melt and mollify the Heart. Let us then ſtir up ourſelves, and one another, to this godly Sorrow for the Sins of the Land. There is need of Rivers of Tears for theſe Heaps of Sin; as they tell of *Hercules* his letting in a River to that monſtrous Stable of *Augeas*, that could not otherwiſe have been cleanſed in the Time allotted him.

And

And truly, as the Duty lies upon all the Faithful, the Miniſters of the Word ought to be moſt eminent in it, the chief Mourners, the Precentors, to take up the Tune of theſe Themes, *Joel* ii. 17. And all that wiſh the Good of Church and Kingdom ought to bear a Part in them, according to their Meaſure. Have we not much need to intreat Reconcilement with God, that he prove not our Enemy? Yes, ſurely, and were we reconciled with him, we would have little need to fear the Power of Man.

Now they that would be profitable Mourners for others Sins, by all means, muſt have theſe two Conditions I mention'd; to be careful Obſervers of the Law themſelves, and to mourn for their own failing and breaking of it. Now to the obſerving of the Law, it is abſolutely needful to know and underſtand it, and that not only in the Letter and Superfice, but according to the ſpiritual Senſe and Meaning of it: For without this Knowledge, a Man may light upon ſome Duty by Gueſs, as it were in the Dark; but obſerve the Law he cannot. They are not only reproveable that glory in their own Sins, and make Sport of the Sins of others, but they miſtake it much, that think it enough to conſider their own with Grief, and judge the Sins of others an Impertinency for them to think on. They mourn not right for others that begin not at themſelves, ſo they mourn never aright for themſelves that end in themſelves. He that here thus weeps for others, made his Bed to ſwim with theſe Rivers for his own Sin, *Pſal.* vi. 6. (2.) As a Man muſt know this Law, ſo he muſt be inwardly convinced and perſuaded of the Divinity of it, that it is God's Law. (3.) He muſt have a deep Apprehenſion of the Majeſty and Authority of the Lawgiver, to work Reverence, and of his Goodneſs to beget Love; and the due Mixture of theſe two will both ſtrongly command and ſweet-

en Obedience to his Commandments. And this Obedience, tho' it be not an abſolute and perfect fulfilling of any one of the Commandments, yet it has a Reſpect to them all, as this *Pſalm* hath it, which is (ſo to ſpeak) an imperfect kind of Perfection. And from this Reſpect to the Law, which is the obſerving of it, will flow that other Condition, of grieving when we break it.

And beſides all other Things that ſhould make a Chriſtian's own Sin grievous to him, there is one Thing cannot but move him much, The Conſideration of the Sorrow and Sufferings of Chriſt. To view the Bleedings of the Lord Jeſus, cannot chuſe but pierce a believing Soul, and make it ſay, "Did "my Redeemer ſhed his Blood for my Sins, and "ſhall not I myſelf ſhed Tears for them?" I know the natural Conſtitution of ſome denies them Tears; but if it do ſo to any, make up that Want with Senſe of inward Grief, and it is well enough. The Eye of God can diſcern that as well as the other. But truly, where Men have Tears for lighter Cauſes, (for all other Cauſes are lighter) and none for this, they feel not yet the Weight of Sin, except that Want be through the Deepneſs of Sorrow, which ſometimes will ſtop the Current of Tears, tho' it uſed to run at other Times; as they ſay, *Curæ leves loquuntur, ingentes ſtupent.* But this is a rare and happy Impediment.

And to anſwer another Doubt: If you find ſometimes worldly Griefs ſtir you more violently, yet let this godly Sorrow affect you more conſtantly, that it may have the Advantage in Continuance, if it fall ſhort in the Degree.

But as this Grief muſt begin at home, as they ſay of Charity, it muſt not be ſo ſelfiſh as to reſt there. And truly, where it comes in that Order, it may be ſome way a ſtronger Evidence of Sincerity, to mourn

for

for others Sins than for our own; for there ſeems to be more of God in it, becauſe there is leſs in it of ourſelves, and of our own particular Intereſt.

Now you will poſſibly think it but an unpleaſant Duty that you have heard urged all this while; but look forward, and conſider the Iſſue of it. That which Chriſt ſpeaks in particular to his Diſciples, is generally true in all Chriſtians, *Joh.* xvi. 20. *Ye ſhall weep and lament* (ſays he) *but the World ſhall rejoice; ye ſhall be ſorrowful, but your Sorrow ſhall be turned* (or made) *into Joy.* The Water of thoſe Tears ſhall be turned into Wine of Conſolation. The Traffick of theſe Rivers is gainful, they export Grief, and import Joy. When theſe Tears are called *Seed*, the Harveſt-crop is called *Joy. They that ſow in Tears ſhall reap in Joy.* They are here called *Rivers*, and they are anſwered with a River, *Pſal.* lxxxvi. 8. for which they ſhall in end be perfectly exchanged. *Thou ſhalt make them drink of the River of thy Pleaſures.* And *Rev.* vii. 17. *The Lamb ſhall feed them, and lead them unto living Fountains of Waters.* Here they run down the Eyes and water the Cheeks, and there you read that God ſhall wipe them away from their Eyes. Who would not be content to weep, to have God wipe away their Tears with his own Hand? Be ambitious then to be found amongſt the Mourners in *Sion*; and when ye remove from this Valley of Tears, God ſhall at once fully wipe away all the Stain of Sin from your Souls, and all Tears for it from your Eyes. And as he ſhall wipe away the Tears with the one Hand, he will ſet the Crown upon your Heads with the other.

SER-

SERMON VIII.

PREFACE.

BLESSED *are they that dwell in thy Houſe,* ſaith the Pſalmiſt, and he adds this Reaſon, *They will be ſtill praiſing thee.* There is indeed always in God's Houſe both fit Opportunity and plentiful Matter of his Praiſes. But the greateſt Number of thoſe that frequent his Houſe, do not dwell in it, their Delight and Affection is not there. Therefore they cannot praiſe him, they come in as Strangers, and have no Skill of the Songs of Praiſe. Yea, and the very Children of the Family, that worſhip in Spirit and in Truth, find their Inſtruments (their Hearts) very often quite out of Tune for Praiſes, and ſometimes moſt of all, when Praiſes are requiſite. They find ſtill ſuch abundant Cauſe of Complaint in themſelves, weighing down their Spirits, that they can hardly at all wind them up to magnify that God of our Mercy, which is far more abundant. If we would take a reflex View and look back upon our Carriage this Day in the Preſence of our God, who is among us, that would not find much Work for ſad Thoughts? Would not one find that he had a hard and ſtony Heart? another a light inconſtant wandring Heart to complain of? A third an unbelieving Heart? And ſome all of theſe? And they (if ſuch there be) that have both deeply ſorrowed, and been largely comforted will poſſibly for all that, upon former ſad Experience, be full of Fears and Jealouſies, that this ſweet Temper will not be of long Continuance; that e're long the World or ſome Luſt, will find, or make a Way to creep

creep in, and baniſh thoſe heavenly Thoughts, and trouble that Peace and Joy which accompanies them. Yet notwithſtanding all theſe Cauſes of Grief or Fear, our Cauſes of Praiſe are both more and greater. And it is no Reaſon, that the Senſe of our own Evil, ſhould prejudge that Acknowledgment of God's Goodneſs, yea rather it ſhould ſtir us up to extol it ſo much the more. Ceaſe not to bemoan the Evils of your own Hearts; but withal forget not to magnify the Riches of his Grace, who hath given himſelf for you, and to you. Theſe two will not hinder one another, but the due Intermixture of them will make a very good Harmony. And the Fruit of them will be this, you ſhall have ſtill more Cauſe to praiſe and leſs to complain. When the Lord ſhall find you humble Acknowledgers of his Grace, he will delight to beſtow more Grace upon you, and will ſubdue thoſe Iniquities for you, which you cannot. And though he is pleaſed to do it but gradually by little and little, yet in the End, the Conqueſt ſhall be full; and then he who is the Author and Finiſher of your Faith, though it is his own Work, yet becauſe it is done in you, he ſhall account the Victory yours, as obtained by you, and give you as Conquerors, the Crown of Glory, *To him that overcometh* (ſaith he) *will I give to ſit with me in my Throne*, &c.

There is nothing here, but from free Grace. The Courage and Strength to fight in this ſpiritual Warfare, the Victory by fighting, and the Crown by Victory, flow all from that Fountain. *In all theſe Things we are more than Conquerors* (ſaith the Apoſtle) but how? *through him that loved us.* Therefore if we deſire to be ſuch, let us humble ourſelves before the Throne of Grace, intreating both for Grace and Glory in the Name of Chriſt our Mediator.

CANT.

CANT. I. 3.

Becauſe of the Savour of thy good Ointments, thy Name is as Ointment poured forth, therefore do the Virgins love thee.

THE natural Workings and Deſires of Things are agreeable to their Being. The Beaſts according to their ſenſitive Life ſeek thoſe things that tend to the Good and Preſervation of that Life, and affect nothing higher than thoſe, and they are ſatisfied. Man, (except ſuch as are in the loweſt Stage and border upon the Beaſts) finds Nature, even corrupt Nature, raiſing him to higher Deſires and Deſigns. And yet of the beſt of them, the Apoſtle's Maxim holds true, *They that are after the Fleſh mind the things of the Fleſh*, and yet he ſubjoins the Excellency of ſome Men beyond the beſt Naturaliſt, *They that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit*, Rom. viii. 5. They muſt be confined to things natural, but are ſtrongly moved towards ſpiritual Bleſſings, and Chriſt the Sum of them. And having once taſted of his Sweetneſs can ſay, *Becauſe of the Savour of thy good Ointments*, &c. They that are elevated to a ſupernatural Being, can admit nothing into Competition with his Love, and this it is that lies under theſe Words, *Becauſe of the Savour of thy good Ointments*, &c.

Numbers have promiſcuouſly been his Gueſts at this Time, and the greateſt Number think they came to good Purpoſe. But know that you are ſo far from partaking of Chriſt in the Sacrament, that you have not ſo much as ſmelt his Perfumes, if you be not ſtrongly taken with his Love, Great are the Praiſes, and many the Duties you owe him for ſo rich Favours; and therefore ſhew your good Will, and endeavour ſome Payment. But know that none of them

them are current except they be ſtamped with *Love*. If you love not, you do nothing; all your Labours and Services without it, are as ſo many Cyphers, they amount to juſt nothing. And with it, the meaneſt of them will find Acceptance.

You have briefly in the Words, *Chriſt's Lovelineſs*, and *the Chriſtian's Love*; the former the Cauſe of the latter, both couched under borrowed Terms, according to the whole Strain of this allegorical Song, to which the true experimental Knowledge of this Divine Love is the beſt Commentary.

In all Love, three Things are neceſſary. (1.) Some Goodneſs in the Object, either true and real, or apparent and ſeeming to be ſo; for the Soul be it never ſo evil, can affect nothing but what it takes ſome Way to be Good. (2.) There muſt be a Knowledge of that Goodneſs; for the moſt excellent things, if altogether unknown, affect not. (3.) There muſt be a Suitableneſs or Agreement of that good Thing with the Nature of thoſe which ſhould affect it; otherwiſe indeed how good ſoever it is, it is not good to them.

Now all theſe we have clearly in this Love. (1.) The Goodneſs, the Excellency of Chriſt expreſt by *precious Ointments*. (2.) The Manifeſtation and making of it known, ſignified by *the pouring forth of his Name*. (3.) His Fitneſs and Congruity with them here mentioned, under this Denomination *Virgins*; ſuch as have the Senſes of their Souls, not ſtopt with the Pollutions of the World, but pure and active, and (therefore as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Heb.* v. 14.) *exerciſed to diſcern Good and Evil*. Theſe three Requiſites thus happily met, muſt needs produce Love, *Therefore the Virgins love thee*,

Becauſe of the Savour of thy good Ointments.] How true is the Apoſtle's Word, when he calls Chriſt the Believers *All things!* And that radical Grace of

Faith, becauſe it apprehends Chriſt, hath a kind of Univerſality; and it is reaſonable too, it alone being to the Soul, what all the five Senſes are to the Body. It is the Eye and the Mouth, a wonderful Eye: *It ſees him that is inviſible*, Heb. iv. 27. The Mouth, *it taſtes that the Lord is gracious*, 1 Pet. ii. 3. Yea, take theſe two both together in one Place, *Pſal.* xxxiv. 8. *O taſte and ſee that the Lord is good.* It is the Soul's Ear, for what elſe is meant, when it is ſaid, *He that hath an Ear to hear, let him hear*; and was it not that *Touch* which Chriſt took ſpecial Notice of, and with good Reaſon diſtinguiſhed it from the common Touch of the Multitude that was crowding about him; that *Touch* alone draws Virtue from him, *Some hath touched me, for there is a Virtue gone out of me.* And laſtly, as it is all thoſe other Senſes, and Chriſt its Object in Reference to them all, ſo here in its *Smelling*, it finds the Savour of his fragrant Graces and by that works Love, *Becauſe of the Savour*, &c.

What ſtrange odds is there betwixt the Opinion of Chriſt's Spouſe and the World that knows him not? They wonder what ſhe ſees in him deſirable; ſhe wonders that they are not all raviſhed with his Excellencies. They prefer the baſeſt Vanities in the World before him; ſhe finds the choiceſt and richeſt things in the World too mean to reſemble the ſmalleſt Part of his Worth. See in this *Song* how buſily and skilfully ſhe goes to all the Creatures, and crops the rareſt Pieces in Nature and Art to ſet forth her Well-beloved, and ſeems to find them all too poor for her Purpoſe. One while ſhe extols him above all things beautiful, and pleaſant to the Eye; another while above things delectable to the Taſte, as in the former Verſe, *Thy Loves are better than Wine*, and here prefers the Perfume of his Graces to the moſt precious Ointments.

When

When a natural Eye looks upon the Sacrament, to wit, of the Lord's Supper, it finds it a bare and mean kind of Ceremony. Take heed there be not many that come to it, and partake of it with others that prize it little, have but low Conceits of it, and do indeed find as little in it as they look for. But oh! what precious Conſolation and Grace doth a Believer meet with at this Banquet? How richly is the Table furniſhed to his Eye; what plentiful Varieties employ his Hand and Taſte? what Abundance of rare Dainties? Yet there is nothing but one here, but that one is all things to the believing Soul, it finds his Love is ſweeter than the richeſt Wine to the Taſte, or beſt Odours to the Smell; and that delightful Word of his, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*, is the only Muſick to a diſtreſſed Conſcience.

Thy good Ointments.] The holy Ointment of the Sanctuary under the Law was compoſed according to God's own Preſcription, *Exod.* xxx. 25. And they were ſtraitly forbid to imitate it, or make any like it, to ſignify the ſingular Holineſs, the matchleſs Worth of the anointing *Oil of Gladneſs*, wherewith our High Prieſt, the Lord Jeſus, was *anointed above his Fellows.* And in this he is incomparable, that his Ointment he hath not from without. It was his own Divine Nature that perfumed his Manhood with theſe precious Ointments. God and the Spirit of the Lord, is ſaid to have anointed him, *Pſal.* xlv. 7. *Thou loveſt Righteouſneſs and hateſt Wickedneſs: Therefore God, thy God hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladneſs above thy Fellows*; and *Iſa.* lxi. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed me to preach good Tidings unto the Meek*, &c. But know that that Spirit, and the Father are one in Eſſence with the eternal Son. In that myſtical Song much like to this, in the xlv. *Pſalm* at the 8th *Ver.* It is ſaid *his Garments ſmell of* Myrrh *and* Aloes, *and*

Caſſia, *as he comes forth of his Ivory Palaces.* When he came down from his glorious Court above to dwell among Men, he apparelled himſelf like them; he was clothed with human Fleſh. But yet that Veſture was ſo tranſcendently enriched with all Graces as with coſtly Perfumes, that Men might eaſily know there was more under them than a mere Man. Yea even in that low Eſtate did ſuch Beams of his Glory ſhine through, that all whoſe Eyes were open, did clearly behold them, and knew him to be no leſs than the only begotten Son of God, by this, that *he was ſo full of Grace and Truth*, Joh. i. 14. And theſe are, in a Word, theſe precious Ointments, whoſe delightful Smell is here commended.

Now to enumerate and deſcribe theſe Graces, what Tongue of Men, yea or of Angels were ſufficient? What other is the main Subject of the whole Scriptures? what mean all the Figures and Ceremonies of the Law; the coſtly Furniture and Ornaments of the Temple; the rich Veſtments of the High Prieſt; that fine Linen, that Silk and Gold, theſe Gems and precious Stones? was any of them, were they all any other but Shadows and dim Reſemblances of the matchleſs Perfections of Jeſus Chriſt? It is ſtrange, that Chriſtians have ſo low Conceits of their High Redeemer! What is the Goſpel, but a more clear and plentiful pouring forth of thoſe Ointments? What was the great Labour and Buſineſs of the holy Apoſtles, but the diffuſing of Chriſt's Graces thro' the World? *I determined to know nothing among you ſave Chriſt and him crucified*, ſays St. *Paul* to his *Corinthians.* What was that other Sacrament and this, but Coverts under which Chriſt conveys himſelf and his Graces to the believing Soul, while the profane and light hearted Receivers are ſent away with empty Elements? Thus you ſee how ample a Subject the Graces are in the general. And truly the Conſideration

ſideration of any one particular of them might be the Employment of many Hours. Would you hear the *Wiſdom* of Chriſt? look what the Apoſtle ſays of it, *Col.* ii. 3. *In him are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge.* Not ſome Drops of Wiſdom, no, nor Streams, but a Fountain; a Treaſure, not one Treaſure, but Treaſures; many, yea, all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge; yet not obvious to every Eye, but, as Treaſures, are hid. The Children of Wiſdom, which are the World's Fools, have ſome Knowledge of this his Wiſdom, and draw from it for their own Uſe; but to ſound the Depth of it, who can be able?

No leſs admirable is his *Holineſs*, he is both the immaculate Lamb, and the undefiled Sacrifice, *ſuch a High Prieſt became us:* Became us! Yes, *holy, harmleſs and undefiled*, Heb. vii. 26. The more we were defiled with Sin, the more ſtood we in need of an undefiled and ſpotleſs High Prieſt. It was as expedient, that he ſhould be unlike us in that, as that he ſhould be like us in all other things. Therefore, as for the legal Prieſthood there was a holy conſecrating Oil, this immortal High Prieſt was anointed with moſt entire and compleat Holineſs; and this perfect Holineſs of his, is ſet forth as *Myrrh*, the beſt Ointments and Spices, *Myrrh* which is of a Virtue preſervative from Corruption. He was not only of excellent Smell, while he lived among Men, but this Myrrh did likewiſe preſerve and exempt him from contracting any Corruption or Pollution, by the bad Air of ſinful Company; ſo that he converſed with Sinners, that he might convert them without any Danger of Infection.

And as he was thus extraordinarily anointed with the Spirit of Wiſdom and Holineſs, ſo likewiſe with the Spirit of *Meekneſs*, therefore called *The Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World:* His

Voice

Voice was not heard in the Streets. And take in that other Grace, which he himſelf mentions, together with his Meekneſs, as being near in Nature to it, *Humility*; *learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart*, Matth. xi. 29. Indeed, Humility is an odoriferous Grace, it is a gracing decoring Grace, and it adds a kind of Sweetneſs and Luſtre to all other Graces; yea, it ſerves ſingularly as a Character for the Trial of the Truth of all other Graces. As Balſam which is the chief of precious Ointments, uſed to be tried, that is the trueſt and beſt, that put into any Liquor, goes to the Bottom, that but ſlight, which ſwims above; ſo theſe Graces are moſt upright, that are accompanied with moſt Humility. And that this may be out of doubt, you know that Jeſus Chriſt (of whom we now ſpeak) as he had moſt Grace, ſo was he moſt exemplary in Humility. And certainly, the ſweet Smell of this good Ointment, did fill the whole Houſe, when he waſhed his Diſciples Feet, *Joh.* xiii. as is ſaid of the Ointment that *Mary* poured upon his Feet, in the foregoing Chapter, *Joh.* xii.

To Baal Shemin.

Amongſt many other of his gracious Qualities that might be mentioned, there is one we cannot but take particular notice of, his *Love*; the rather, becauſe the fragrant Smell of his Graces is here ſaid to beget Love. Now you know that one of the ſtrongeſt Attractives of *Love*, is *Love*, *Magnes amoris amor*, Ἐρως ἔρωτα τίκτει. What made him empty himſelf of his Glory, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, but becauſe he was full of Love? What made him take on the Form of a Servant, ſuffer Heat and Cold, and Hunger, and Poverty, but Love? What other was it made him digeſt the Perſecutions, Revilings, and the Contradiction of Sinners, but Love? But the great Wonder of his Love is this, he *died* to become our Life; *who hath loved me, and given himſelf for me*, ſays the great

great Apoſtle St. *Paul.* And *hereby perceive we the Love of God, becauſe he laid down his Life for us*, ſays the beloved Apoſtle St. *John.* Was it the Nails that held him faſt to the Croſs, when they tauntingly bid him come down? No, it was his *Love*, that was ſtronger than Death. But all this was nothing to the angry Countenance of his Father, nor would he ever have ventured upon that, if infinite Love had not perſuaded him. No wonder if the Apoſtle call it a Love that paſſeth Knowledge, *That you may know*, ſaith he, *the Love of Chriſt which paſſeth Knowledge*, Eph. iii. 19. Know it we may, and ſhould, but we muſt know withal, that we cannot know it fully. And this is our Comfort, that it is greater than we can comprehend, for if it were not ſo, it would be leſs than we ſtand in Need of. So much of his Love we may underſtand, as may abundantly inflame our Hearts with Love to him; for this Purpoſe hath he revealed it, and made *his Name like an Ointment poured out.* And that is the ſecond Thing.

His Name.] That is, the Report and Manifeſtation of his Excellencies. And if you will take it properly of his Name *Jeſus*, and *Chriſt* or the *Meſſiah*, it is true of them, for they are ſignificative of theſe Excellencies. Ask an afflicted Conſcience, if *Jeſus*, that is, *a Saviour*, be not a precious Word, that hath a ſovereign Value, both a refreſhing Smell and a healing Virtue. The Hammer of the Law may break a ſtony Heart in Pieces, but it is only the Blood of Jeſus that can ſoften it. And where it is effectually poured, either upon a wounded Soul, it heals it, or upon a hard Heart, it mollifies it. For that other Name, *Chriſt*, well may it be called *an Ointment poured out*, for it ſignifies his *anointing*. And that the ſweet Savour of this Name may affect, read but that one Paſſage, *Iſa.* lxi. 1. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, becauſe the Lord hath anointed*

ted me to preach good Tidings, &c. What ineſtimable Riches of Conſolation is there in each of theſe Effects, to which Chriſt was anointed, and yet we find not a Word among them all for a proud ſtiff-necked Sinner. Here are *good Tidings*, but it is to the meek; comfortable *binding up*, but it is for the *broken hearted*; *Liberty*, but it is for *Captives* and *Priſoners*, groaning under their Chains, and deſirous to be delivered; not for ſuch as delight in their Bondage. There is *Oil of Joy* and *Garments of Praiſe*, but they are provided for *mourning dejected Spirits* that need them; not to the impenitent. On the contrary, there is a terrible Word interjected in the midſt of theſe Promiſes, *The Day of Vengeance of our God*; and that is the Portion of Chriſt's Enemies, and ſuch are all incorrigible Sinners.

Thus it is, at the ſame Banquet from which you come, one may be filled with ſpiritual Joy, and the very Perſon that ſits next, be filled with a ſecret Curſe, and return more miſerable than he came. But let the diſconſolate lamenting Sinner liſt up his Head, and behold Chriſt, the Son of God anointed a *Prophet* to preach Salvation and Liberty to ſuch, a *Prieſt* to purchaſe it, and a *King* to give it.

Now the *pouring out* of this Name is divers. Before the Coming of the Meſſiah his Name was poured out in Prophecies and Promiſes, in Types and legal Ceremonies, but more fully when the *Word was made Fleſh*. Then Angels and holy Men, yea, and Women, ſpake clearly of him. What was his Father's Voice at his Baptiſm? The Holy Ghoſt's deſcending? What was his own Preaching and Miracles, and Converſation, but all the pouring forth of his precious Name? And in his Sufferings and Death, what think you? Was not his Name then poured forth, yea, his Blood with it? Yes, truly, being extended on the Croſs, and his Body pierced

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in divers Places; his precious Ointments were ſhed abroad towards all the Quarters of the World. Their Smell both reached Heaven and the viſible Earth. God the Father (as he was ſaid to do in *Noah*'s Sacrifice) did much more ſmell in his Sacrifice, a Savour of Reſt, appeaſing his Wrath; and all Believers a Savour of Peace, a quieting of their Conſciences. And as aromatick Spices, when they are pounded out and beaten, ſend forth their ſweet Smells moſt liberally, ſo in theſe his Sufferings, did the *Obedience*, *Patience* and *Love*, and all the *Graces*, and the *Name* of our Saviour, moſt clearly manifeſt themſelves to the World. After he was dead they embalmed his Body, but they knew not that his own Virtue would do more than all the Ointments and Spices in the World could do, not only by preſerving his Body from Corruption, but by raiſing it the third Day. And truly, after his Reſurrection, his own Diſciples knew his Name better than ever before, and yet more fully after his *Aſcenſion*, when the Holy Ghoſt came down upon them, which was poured from Heaven on them; for this very End, that they might pour forth Chriſt's Name to the Ends of the Earth, *Acts* ii. 8. And they did ſo, carrying this precious Treaſure in earthen Veſſels, as that elect Veſſel St. *Paul* ſpeaks. And ever ſince, God hath continued the pouring forth of this Name, by the Miniſtry and Preaching of the Goſpel. It is true, there are too many of thoſe that are employed in this Work, that ſeek themſelves, and their own Ends, rather than his Glory whom they preach. And they that are more upright, the very beſt of them are ſinful Men. But how mean and unworthy ſoever they be, deſpiſe not the Goſpel. Let the ſweet Name, which they pour forth, prevail for itſelf, that ſo you may reverence and love it, if you would have *Salvation* by it; and *there is no other Name under Heaven*, by which *that* can be obtained.

As this Name is poured forth in the *Goſpel preached*, ſo in the *Sacraments* annexed to it; and particularly in this, when the Bread is broken, and the Wine poured out. And was not this the earneſt Deſire of the Receivers of it this Day? It ſhould have been to have our Share in it, for the Refreſhment and Curing of our Souls. Nor ſhall any that came thus, be diſappointed. And if not preſently, yet moſt certainly, and that in due time they ſhall find the ſweet Fruits of it.

You have heard many ways how the Name of Chriſt is poured out, yet there is one more, without which all the reſt are ineffectual: It is this, the ſecret and powerful *working of the Spirit of God* in the Soul. The Ordinances and Means of Salvation do indeed pour forth the Name of Chriſt round about a Man, but till the Spirit concur with them, not one Drop falls within the Soul. And is he not ſo much the more miſerable, that hears much of Chriſt, and partakes nothing of him? Yes, ſurely, a Man may have much common Knowledge of Chriſt, and may underſtand well, yea, may preach well, concerning his Worth and Graces, and yet not *love him*. But there is a particular Knowledge of him by the Infuſion of the Spirit, and where the ſmalleſt Meaſure of this is, it preſently wins the Affection. There is *a ſhedding abroad of the Love of God in our Hearts*, that the Apoſtle ſpeaks of, *Rom.* v. 5. and this draws us after him; for our Love to God is nothing elſe but the Reflexion of his Love to us. So then, though many hear of Chriſt, yet becauſe there are but few that have this ſpecial Knowledge of him, therefore it is, that ſo few do truly eſteem of him and love him; and they are ſuch as are here called Virgins: And that is the third Thing.

The Virgins.] Similitude and Conformity of Natures begets Friendſhip; pure Affections delight in a pure

pure Object, and makes them ſuch. For the Truth is, Chriſt doth not find Men naturally ſuitable to himſelf, but as he took on our Nature, ſo he watheth away the Sinfulneſs of our Nature, which he took not on, and makes us that Way conformable to his Nature. And they that are ſo changed, though they were formerly Lovers of Sin, yet by Converſion, which is called Regeneration, they are born again, and ſo become not only chaſte, but even Virgins, ſpiritually: For by Virgins, here are not meant ſuch as *Romiſh* Votaries fancy them to be, no, this Virginity may well conſiſt with any lawful State of Life.

Theſe Virgins are ſuch as be truly holy, and pure in Heart and Life, who though they are not perfectly free from all Sin, yet have they Affection to no Sin. Theſe are ſingularly delighted with the Smell of Chriſt's Name and Graces, while the voluptuous Perſon, and the profane Worldling, diſlikes and deſpiſes it*. The Virgins, they beſtow their Affection whole and entire upon Chriſt.

How groſly do you delude yourſelves, that make your Hearts Dens of Pride, filthy Luſt, Malice and Envy, and thouſands of Vanities, and yet think to find a Corner in them to lodge Chriſt too? Truly, you would both ſtraiten him in Room, and give him very bad Neighbours. No, they that think not a whole Heart too little for him, ſhall never enjoy him.

The Virgins love thee.] Grace deſtroys not the natural Paſſions of the Soul, but corrects them only, by deſtroying their Corruption, and ſo they become not only not contrary to Grace, but are made the Subject and Seat of Grace. This of Love, which is the chief of them, we ſee it aboliſheth not, but rectifies it, recalling it to its due Object, and turning it into the right Channel, by which it may empty itſelf into the Ocean of Goodneſs.

* *Balſama ſic ſuibus, ſic male nardus olent.*

And this Love may well conſiſt with the Purity of Virgins; yea, it is this Love that purifies and makes them ſuch. *The Virgins love*, but whom? *Thee.* And it is as reaſonable a Love as it is pure; *therefore they love thee*, becauſe thou haſt made them, in ſome meaſure, apprehenſive of thy Worth, which commands the Love of all that know it; not a cold and indifferent Affection, but a ſuperlative ardent Love, far over-topping all their other Deſires. And good Reaſon, ſince Chriſt doth infinitely, and beyond all compariſon, ſurpaſs all other Things deſirable. Ask your own Hearts, if you love Chriſt thus; for if not thus, you love him not at all. The Apoſtle St. *Paul's* Love was of this Size, *Phil.* iii. 7, 8. *But what Things were Gain to me, thoſe I counted Loſs for Chriſt; yea, doubtleſs, and I count all Things but Loſs, for the Excellency of the Knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the Loſs of all Things, and do count them but Dung, that I may win Chriſt.* Thus Love will not only undergo Difficulties and Sufferings for Chriſt, without either repining or fainting, but it will even be glad to meet with them, as Opportunity is, to exerciſe and teſtify itſelf. Hard Things will ſeem moſt eaſy for his ſake, and bitter Things exceeding ſweet. In a Word, to him that loves, ſcarce any thing is impoſſible. Love is the leading Paſſion of the Soul, all the reſt conform themſelves to it, *Deſire* and *Hope*, and *Fear*, *Joy* and *Sorrow*. If then you love Chriſt, the Deſires and Breathings of your Soul after him are ſtrong and earneſt, if he withdraw himſelf, or appear angry. If either you ſee him not, or ſee him look diſcontented, your Grief will be ſo deep that it cannot be allayed by any worldly Employments; yet upon ſome former Tokens of his Love, which is known to be unchangeable, Hope will uphold the Soul, till the Beams of his Grace ſcatter the Cloud, and break through.

through. Tho' our *Joſeph* ſeem ſtrange, and ſpeak roughly for a while, he cannot long refrain diſcovering his Affection. Again, love you him, unſpeakable will be your Joy when he ſmiles upon you? As great will be your Delight in Poſſeſſion as your Deſire is in Purſuit; and while you have his Preſence, it will be too hard a Task for any Affliction to diſmay you. Have you indeed heard Chriſt ſpeak comfortably to you this Day at his holy Table? How will this enable the Soul, and arm it againſt Dangers, and diſtracting diſtruſtful Fears? *Perfect Love caſteth out Fear*, ſaith St. *John*, that is, all baſe and ſervile Fear: But there is one Fear that is in no Heart but where Love begets it, *Fear to offend*. You know how wary and loth Men are naturally to diſpleaſe thoſe they love; therefore it is, that Love to Chriſt, and a careful obſerving of his Commandments, are inſeparable Companions: Yea, Love itſelf is the *fulfilling of the Law*, for it gives up the Heart to God, and conſequently the whole Man. Then there is no Return of Duty which your receiving of Chriſt calls for, (and what doth it not call for?) there is none, I ſay, but is compriſed under this one of *Love*. Do you owe him Praiſes? Yes, ſurely; then *love him*, that will ſtir you up to praiſe him. You never knew, but where much Love was in the Heart, it made the Tongue ready and active upon all Occaſions to praiſe the Party loved. Love will entertain ſmall Courteſies with great Thanks, much more where the Benefit ſo far exceeds all poſſible Thankfulneſs. Ought you to ſerve and obey him? Doubtleſs he hath for that Purpoſe redeemed you with his precious Blood. And truly there is no Obedience nor Service, ſo full and ſo chearful, as that which flows from Love. Should you ſtudy Conformity to Chriſt, and labour to be like him? Yes, for this is to walk worthy of Chriſt; then there is nothing aſ-

ſimilates ſo much as Love. Men delight in their Society whom they love, and by their Society they do inſenſibly contract their Cuſtoms, and become like them. Theſe Virgins that love Chriſt for his Graces, they love to converſe with him, and by converſing with him, they receive of his Graces, and have a Smell of his Perfumes. Not only do they by the Smell of his Garments, or ſuch impoſed Rites, obtain the Bleſſing, but likewiſe ſmell like him by the Participation of ſanctifying Grace, of his Wiſdom and Holineſs, in a pure and godly Converſation, (abſtaining from the impure Luſts and Pollutions of the World) of his Meekneſs and Humility. Never think that one and the ſame Soul can have much Pride and much of Chriſt; ever the more Grace a Man hath, the more Senſe hath he likewiſe of his own Unworthineſs, and God's free Mercy, and conſequently, the more Humility. If you love Chriſt, you cannot chuſe but be like him in Love to your Brethren. This is expreſly compared, by the Pſalmiſt, to the precious Ointment poured upon *Aaron*'s Head, that ran down to the very Skirts of his Garments. Our Head, and High Prieſt, the Lord Jeſus, hath incomparably teſtified his Love to Believers, whom he is pleaſed to call his *Brethren*; they are far from equalling him, either in Love to him, or one to another, but they do imitate him in both. This is his great Commandment, *that we love one another, even as he loved us*, which is expreſt both as a ſtrange Motive and a high Example. 'Tis not poſſible that a Spirit of Malice and implacable Hatred can conſiſt with the Love of Chriſt. Finally, Should you be ready to ſuffer for Chriſt? Yes: Then Love is that which will enable you; and if you were inflamed with this Fire, then, tho' burned for him, that Fire would only conſume your Droſs, and be ſoon extinguiſhed, but this would endure for ever.

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By theſe and the like Evidences, try whether you indeed love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. And by theſe Fruits, you that profeſs to love him, teſtify the Sincerity of your Love; and be aſſured, that if you be now found amongſt theſe Virgins that love him, you ſhall one Day be of the Number of thoſe Virgins that are ſpoken of, *Rev.* xiv. 3, 4. that ſing a new Song before the Throne of God.

If you hate the Defilements of the World, and be not polluted with inordinate Affection to the Creature, it ſhall never repent you to have made Choice of Chriſt, he ſhall fill your Hearts with Peace and Joy in believing. When you come to his Houſe and Table, he ſhall ſend you home with Joy and ſweet Conſolation, ſuch as you would not exchange with Crowns and Scepters. And after ſome few of theſe running Banquets here below, you ſhall enter into the great Marriage Supper of the Lamb, where Faith ſhall end in Sight, and Hope in Poſſeſſion, and Love continue in perpetual and full Enjoyment, where you ſhall be never weary, but for ever happy, in beholding the Face of the Bleſſed Trinity, to whom be Glory. *Amen.*

SERMON IX.

PREFACE.

HOW true is that Word of our Saviour, who is Truth itſelf, *Without me ye can do nothing*, ſevered from me, as that Branch that is not in me. They that are altogether out of Chriſt, in ſpi-

ſpiritual Exerciſes do nothing at all. 'Tis true, they may pray and hear the Word, yea, and preach it too, and yet in ſo doing they do nothing, nothing in effect. They have the Matter of good Actions, but it is the internal Form gives Being to Things. They are but a Number of empty Words, and a dead Service to a living God. For all our outward Performances and Worſhip of the Body is nothing but the Body of Worſhip, and therefore nothing but a Carcaſe, except the Lord Jeſus, by his Spirit, breathe upon it the Breath of Life. Yea, the Worſhipper himſelf is ſpiritually dead, till he receive Life from Jeſus, and be quickned by his Spirit. If this be true, then it will follow neceſſarily, that where Numbers are met together, (as here) pretending to ſerve and worſhip God, yet he hath very few that do ſo indeed, the greateſt part being out of Chriſt; and ſuch being without him, they can do nothing in his Service.

ROMANS VIII. 7.

Becauſe the carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God; for it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be.

THE ordinary Workings and Actions of Creatures are ſuitable to their Nature, as the aſcending of light Things, and the moving of heavy Things downwards; ſo the vital and ſenſitive Actions of Things that have Life and Senſe. The reaſonable Creature, 'tis true, hath more Liberty in its Actions, freely chuſing one Thing and rejecting another; yet it cannot be denied, that in acting of that Liberty, their Choice and Refuſal follow the Sway of their Nature and Condition. As the Angels and glorified Souls, (their Nature being perfectly holy, and unalterably ſuch) they cannot ſin, they can de-

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light in nothing but in obeying and praiſing that God, in the Enjoyment of whom their Happineſs conſiſteth; ſtill raviſhed in beholding his Face. The Saints again that have not yet reached that Home, and are but on their Journey, they are not fully defecated and refined from the Droſs of Sin: There are in them two Parties, *Natural Corruption*, and *Supernatural Grace*, and theſe keep a ſtruggling within them; but the younger ſhall ſupplant the elder. Grace ſhall in the End overcome, and in the mean while, tho' it be not free from Mixture, yet it is predominant. The main Bent of a renewed Man is Obedience and Holineſs, and any Action of that kind he rejoices in, but the Sin that eſcapes him, he cannot look upon but with Regret and Diſcontent. But alas! they that be ſo minded are very thin ſown in the World, even in God's peculiar Fields, where the Labourage of the Goſpel is, and the outward Profeſſion of true Religion unanimouſly received. Yet the Number of true Converts, ſpiritual-minded Perſons, is very ſmall, the greateſt part acting Sin with Delight, and taking Pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs, living in Diſobedience to God, as in their proper Element; and the Reaſon is, the Contrariety of their Nature to our holy Lord. *The carnal Mind is Enmity againſt God.*

The Mind φρονημα.] Some render it the *Prudence* or *Wiſdom* of the Fleſh. Here you have it, the *carnal Mind*, but the Word ſignifies, indeed, an Act of the Mind, rather than either the Faculty itſelf, or the Habit of Prudence in it, ſo as it diſcovers what is the Frame of both thoſe. The *minding*, as it is uſed, *Ver.* 5. conform to that of *Moſes*, Gen. vi. *Every Imagination of the Thoughts of Man's Heart is only evil continually.* The Word indeed ſignifies the *wiſe Thoughts.* So then take the full Latitude of it

thus: "*The carnal Mind*, in its beſt and wiſeſt "Thoughts, is direct *Enmity againſt God.*"

Carnal, τῆς σαρκὸς.] What is meant by the *Fleſh* here? It is the whole *corrupt Nature* of Man; and *that* we may know by its Oppoſition to the *Spirit*, not to the Spirit or Soul of a Man, for ſo it hath no *Thoughts* nor *Minding*, theſe being proper to the Soul, but oppoſed to the Spirit of God.

Now the Corruption of Nature is called the *Fleſh*, not without very good Reaſon, not only to ſignify the Baſeneſs of it, the Fleſh being the more ignoble and meaner Part of a Man, but becauſe the greateſt Part of the Sins of Mens Lives are about ſenſitive Objects, and things that concern the Fleſh or the Body. It lets in Temptation of Sin to the Soul by the Doors of the Senſes, and it gives the laſt Perfection or Accompliſhment to Sin, by external acting of it. The very firſt Sin, that brought in Death and Miſery with it upon Mankind, the Pleaſure of the *Eye* and of the *Taſte*, were Sharers in the Guiltineſs of it.

The carnal Mind] Man in regard of his Compoſure is, as it were, the Tie and Band of Heaven and Earth; they meet and are married in him. A Body he has taken out of the Duſt, but a Soul breathed from Heaven, from the Father of Spirits; a Houſe of Clay, but a Gueſt of moſt noble Extraction. But the Pity is, it hath forgot its Original, and is ſo drowned in Fleſh, that it deſerves no other but to go under the Name of Fleſh. It is become the Slave and Drudge of the Body, and, as the *Iſraelites* in *Egypt*, made perpetually to moyl in Clay. What is all your Merchandiſe, your Trades and Manufactures, your Tillage and Husbandry, but all for the Body, in its Behalf, for Food and Raiment? In all theſe, the Mind muſt be careful and thoughtful, and yet properly they reach it not, for itſelf hath no Intereſt

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in them. It is true, the Neceſſity of the Body requires much of theſe Things, and ſuperfluous Cuſtom far more; but it is lamentable that Men force their Souls to forget itſelf, and its proper Buſineſs, to attend theſe Things only, and be buſy in them. They ſpend all their Time, and their choiceſt Pains upon periſhing Things, and which is worſe, engage their Affections to them. They *mind earthly things, whoſe End is Deſtruction*, Philip. iii. 19. The ſame Word that is here, φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, &c.

Will you conſider ſeriouſly, that your Souls run the Hazard of periſhing, becauſe you conſider not their ſpiritual Nature? When that earthly Tabernacle of yours ſhall fall to the Ground (and e're long it muſt) your Souls muſt then enter Eternity, and tho' you had as large a Share of earthly things as your earthly Hearts now would wiſh, they all loſe their Uſe in that Moment. They are not a proper Good for the Soul at any Time, and leaſt at that Time. If you keep it all your Life long, buſy about the Intereſt and Benefit of the Fleſh, the Body, how poor will it be when they part, having provided nothing at all for itſelf, but the Guiltineſs of a ſinful Life, which will ſink it into that bottomleſs Pit? Be forewarned then; *for to be carnally minded is Death*, *Ver.* 6. preceeding the Text.

The carnal Mind.] Now as Sin hath abaſed and degenerated the Soul of Man, making it carnal, ſo the Son of God, by taking on our Nature, hath ſublimated it again, and made it ſpiritual. The Souls that received him are ſpiritualized, yea, as Sin made the Soul carnal, Grace makes the very Body to become ſpiritual, making it partaker and co-worker in ſpiritual Things, together with the Soul, in doing and ſuffering, and participant of the Hopes too of an everlaſting Reward. This is the main Chriſtian Character our Apoſtle gives here, that they are ſpi-

ritually minded, and that their Actions ſuit their Minds, *They walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit.* Whereas before, with the reſt of the World, they were eager in the purſuit of Honours, and Profits, and worldly Pleaſures; the now Stream of their Deſires run in another Channel, they ſeek after Honour, and are very ambitious of it; but it is ſuch Honour as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of in this Epiſtle, *Rom.* ii. 7. *By patient Continuance in well doing they ſeek for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality*: Their Mind is upon Profit and Gain, but it is with the ſame Apoſtle, *Philip.* iii. that they *may win Chriſt*, and they account all other things Loſs in compariſon; And their Deſires are after Pleaſure too, but not *carnal Pleaſures*, thoſe are both baſe, and of ſhort Continuance, but the Pleaſures they aim at, are thoſe that are *at God's right Hand, and for evermore*, Pſal. xvi. 11. And that Path of Life he there ſpeaks of, that Way of Holineſs that leads thither, is their Delight. Spiritual Excerciſes they go to, not as their Task only, but more as their Joy and Refreſhment. And this Change the Spirit of God works in the Soul, making it (yea, and the Body wherein it dwells) of carnal, to become ſpiritual, as the Fire, to which the Holy Ghoſt is compared, refines Sand and Aſhes, and makes of them the pureſt Glaſs, which is ſo neat and tranſparent

Enmity againſt God.] Sin hath not only made us unlike God, by defacing his beautiful Image in us; not only Strangers by making us wander far off from him, but *Enemies*; nor Enemies only, but *Enmity* in the Abſtract; for that is emphatical, *The carnal Mind is Enmity*, nothing elſe but Enmity.

Now this Enmity is deſcribed in the latter clauſe of the Text, by an Antipathy, ſo to call it, or not Compliance with the Law of God; *it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither can it be*, to wit, while it re-

remains ſuch. There is an abſolute Impoſſibility in it, to ſuit with the Law of God, and conſequently, with God himſelf. The Reaſon lies in their oppoſite Qualities, God is *ſpiritual* and *holy*, and ſo is the Law, as our Apoſtle hath it in the preceeding Chapter; and the Oppoſition he there makes, betwixt his unregenerate Part and the Law, is wholly true of the unregenerate Man. The *Law is holy*, ſays he, *Ver.* 12. and *Ver.* 14. *it is ſpiritual*; to which too he oppoſes, *but I am carnal, ſold under Sin.*

Where are now thoſe that ſo vilify Grace and magnify Nature? Or, ſhall I rather ſay, nullify Grace, and deify Nature? Here is the beſt Elogy the Apoſtle will beſtow upon the beſt of Natures, *Enmity againſt God.* Nay, all the Sparkles of Virtue and moral Goodneſs in civil Men, and ancient Heathens, is no better; beſides many other things, to be ſaid to the Virtues of thoſe Philoſophers, as Ignorance of Chriſt, by whom alone this Enmity is removed.

I ſhould eaſily confeſs, nor (I think) can any deny it, but that there is in the very Ruins of our Nature, ſome Character left of a Tendency to God, as our chief and only ſatisfying Good, which we may call a kind of Love, and when we hear him ſpoken of, find it flutter and ſtir; and hence Men ſo abhor the Imputation of hating God, and being Enemies. Yet this is ſo ſmothered under Senſuality and Fleſh, that until we be made ſpiritual, nothing appears, but practical, and, as they call it, interpretative Enmity.

There is one thing ſtains them enough, they were all, as that Father ſpeaks, *animalia gloriæ*, they aimed not in their Study of Virtue at God's Glory, but at their own; and is not that Quarrel enough, and matter of Enmity? Says not he, *My Glory I will not give unto another?*

But that is moſt uſeful for you, to convince you of

of that too good Conceit Men have of their natural Condition. You would take it hardly, the moſt profane of you all, if any ſhould come to you, in particular, and tell you, you are an Enemy to God; but I anſwer, there is none of you, if you believe the Scriptures, but will confeſs that all Men are naturally ſuch; and therefore, except we find in ourſelves a notable Alteration from the Condition of Nature, we muſt take with it, that we are Enemies, yea, Enmity to God: Of Strangers, to become acquainted with him, yea, which is more, of Enemies to become Friends, is a greater and more remarkable Change, than to be incident to a Man without any Evidence and Sign of it. I know there is very great Variety in the Way and Manner of Converſion; and to ſome, eſpecially if it be in their tender Years, Grace may be inſtilled, and dropt in, as it were, inſenſibly. But this I may confidently ſay, that whatſoever be the Way of working it, there will be a wide and apparent Difference betwixt Friendſhip with God, and the Condition of Nature, which is Enmity againſt him. Do not flatter yourſelves, ſo long as your Minds remain carnal, ardent in Love to the World, and cold in Love to God, *Lovers of Pleaſures more than of God*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) you are his Enemies, for with him there is no *Neutrality*. That which they ſay, taxing it as a Weakneſs in the Sex, *Aut amat, aut odit, nihil eſt tertium*, is in this Caſe neceſſarily true of all. And this is God's Peculiar, that he can judge infallibly of the Inſide. Thoſe Shadows of Friendſhip Men uſe one with another, will not paſs with him. Deceived he cannot be, but Men may eaſily, and alas! too many do deceive themſelves in this Matter to their own Ruin.

We may learn hence, how deep Sin goes in our Nature, and conſequently, that the Cure and Remedy

medy of it muſt go as deep; that all the Parts of our Bodies, and Powers of our Souls are polluted originally, our very *Mind* and *Conſcience*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, for it is immerſed in Fleſh, and inſlaved to Fleſh naturally; and therefore goes under its Name, we are become all *Fleſh*; that is the Spring of our Miſchiefs; we have loſt our Likeneſs with our Father, the Father of Spirits, the pureſt and moſt ſpiritual Spirit, till renewed by Participation of his Spirit on our Fleſh.

And it is the Error, not only of natural Men, but ſomewhat of the Godly too, that in Self-reformation they ſet themſelves againſt actual Sin, but they lay not the Ax to the Root of the Tree, this Root of Bitterneſs, this our inbred and natural *Enmity* againſt God; and till this be done, the lopping off of ſome Branches will do no good, while the Root is in Vigour thoſe will grow again, and poſſibly, faſter than before. Bewail every known Act of Sin, as much as you can, for the leaſt of them deſerves it: But withal, let the Conſideration of them lead you into Thoughts of this Seed of Rebellion, the Wickedneſs of our Nature, that takes Life with us in the Womb, and ſprings and grows up with us, and this will humble us exceedingly, and raiſe our godly Sorrow to a higher Tide. We find *David* taketh this Courſe, *Pſal.* li. 5. where he is lamenting his particular Sin of Adultery and Murder, it leads him to the Sinfulneſs of his Nature, *I was ſhapen in Iniquity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me*, or, warm me; which he mentions, not to extenuate and diminiſh his Sin; no, he is there very far from that Strain, but adds it as a main Aggravation. Indeed, the Power of original Sin, in the regenerate, is laid very low, yet not altogether extinct, which they find often to their Grief, and makes them cry out with our Apoſtle, in the former Chapter, *O wretched Man that I*

am,

am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death. The Converted are already delivered (as he adds) from the Dominion of it, but not from the Moleſtation and Trouble of it. Tho' it is not a quiet and uncontrolled Maſter, as it was before, yet it is in the Houſe ſtill as an unruly Servant or Slave, ever vexing and annoying them: And this Body of Death they ſhall have ſtill Cauſe to bewail, till Death releaſe them. This Leproſy hath taken ſo deep in the Walls of this Houſe, that it cannot perfectly be cleanſed till it be taken down; and it is this, more than any other Sorrows or Afflictions of Life, that makes the godly Man not only content to die, but deſirous, longing, with our Apoſtle, *to be diſſolved, and be with Chriſt, which is far better.*

As this teaches us the Miſery of Man's Nature, ſo it ſets off and commends exceedingly the Riches of God's Grace. Are Men naturally his Enemies? Why then, admire his *Patience* and *Bounty* a little, and then we will ſpeak of his *ſaving Grace.* Could not he very eaſily eaſe himſelf of his Adverſaries? as he ſays by the Prophet. Wants he Power in his Right Hand to find out and cut off all his Enemies? Surely no, not only he hath Power to deſtroy them all in a Moment, but the very withdrawing of his Hand, that upholds their Being (tho' they conſider it not) would make them fall to nothing. Yet is he pleaſed not only to ſpare Tranſgreſſors, but to give them many outward Bleſſings, *Rain and fruitful Seaſons*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Act.* xiv. And the Earth that is ſo full of Man's Rebellion, is yet more full of his Goodneſs: *The Earth is full of thy Goodneſs.* It is remarkable, that that ſame Reaſon which is given, *Gen.* vi. 5. of the Juſtice of God in drowning the World, is, *Chap.* viii. 21. rendred as the Reaſon of God's reſolved *Patience* ever ſince. Then

His *Grace*, in finding a Way of Reconcilement, and

and not ſparing his own Son, his only begotten Son, to accompliſh it. Nor did he ſpare himſelf. O matchleſs Love! to lay down his Life, not for Friends but for Strangers! Not only ſo, but Enemies, for unrighteous and ungodly Perſons, ſuch as be at Enmity againſt him, *Rom.* v. 7, 8, *&c.* And having done this, he ſends his Word, the Meſſage of Reconciliation, to Rebels, and ſends his Spirit into the Hearts of theſe whom he hath appointed to Salvation, to change their Spirits, that they periſh not in Diſobedience; he brings *them near that were far off*, having ſlain this Enmity by the Death of his Son.

As many of you then, as have hitherto heard this Meſſage of Reconcilement in vain, be perſuaded at laſt to give ear to it. This is all that God's Ambaſſadors require, according to their Inſtructions from himſelf, "That Men would lay down that Enmity "againſt him, and not be ſo fooliſh as wilfully to "periſh in it, 2 *Cor.* v. 20."

Conſider that this Enmity is, 1*ſt*, Unjuſt. 2*dly*, Unhappy. Unjuſt it is, being againſt him who is the chief Object of Love, who is altogether Goodneſs, both in himſelf and towards his Creatures: It is too much not to love him with moſt ardent and ſuperlative Affection; but to entertain Enmity againſt him, is Madneſs: As he ſaid to one who asked, Why are the beautiful loved? *It is a blind Man's Queſtion.* Certainly we are blind, if we ſee not Cauſe enough, not only to deſiſt from Enmity, but to be inflamed with his Love. One Glance of his amiable Countenance is ſufficient to cauſe the moſt rebellious Heart to yield, and lay down Arms, and for ever devote themſelves to his Service. No, we know him not, and therefore it is we hold out againſt him: Is he not the living Spring of all our Comforts? Have we not from him Life and Breath, and all Things? And is he not ready to forgive *Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion*

and Sin? Let Mercy melt our Hearts to him, thoſe ſweet Rays of Love. Let his loving Kindneſs overcome theſe ſtubborn Hearts or Spirits of ours. Among Enemies, the weaker uſually ſeeks firſt for Peace, but here the Mighty; Almighty God comes to intreat Agreement with ſinful Clay.

But if this prevail not, then think how unhappy this Enmity is. You that are ſo afraid of Men, and theſe, weak Men, of Men like yourſelves, whoſe Breath is in their Noſtrils, will ye not tremble at his Power, and be afraid to continue in Terms of Hoſtility againſt him who is the Lord of Hoſts, who hath Power of the Soul and Body both, to kill both and caſt them into Hell? What is the ſtouteſt of Men, but as Stubble to the Flame of his Wrath? *Our God is a conſuming Fire. The Sinners in* Zion *are afraid* (ſays the Prophet;) *who ſhall dwell*, ſay they, *with devouring Fire and everlaſting Burnings*? Then if you would not periſh, when his Wrath is kindled, take that Word of *Eliphaz*, Job xxii. 21. *Acquaint now thyſelf with him, and be at Peace, thereby Good ſhall come unto thee.*

And to you, ſo many as he hath taken into Friendſhip with himſelf, look backward to the Gulf you have eſcaped, and forward to the Happineſs you are appointed to, and let the joint Conſideration of both awaken your Hearts and Tongues to Praiſes. How can your Hearts contain ſuch a Wonder of Love, as he hath manifeſted to you, and not run over in Songs and Praiſe?

And as you owe him Praiſes, ſo ſtudy, being made his Friends, to become more like him: That ſame *idem velle & idem nolle*, to love and hate the ſame Things with him, will be a ſure Teſtimony of Friendſhip. And becauſe Carnality, or fleſhly and earthly Mindedneſs is here made the Character of Enmity, mortify theſe Affections, nail them to that

Croſs

Croſs of Chriſt, whereby the Enmity was taken away. And further, being once admitted into Friendſhip, labour for a further Degree of Intimacy with him, and forbear every thing that may hinder that: Uſe frequent Converſe with him, for that both entertains and increaſes Friendſhip. If any thing fall out on your part (as it too often does) that may occaſion any Strangeneſs betwixt you and your God, reſt not till it be removed. And if you walk in this Way, it ſhall undoubtedly, at length, bring you where you ſhall abide in his Preſence for ever, and ſhall no more fear any Breach or Interruption of enjoying him. *To him be Praiſe.* Amen.

SERMON X.

ROMANS XIII. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject, not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake, &c.

Owe no Man any thing, but to love one another, &c.

THE Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God, that ſhines in the natural Order and Dependence of Things in the Frame of the great World, appears likewiſe, and commends itſelf to us, in the civil Order he hath inſtituted in the Societies of Men, the leſſer World. As out of the ſame Maſs he made the Heaven and the Earth, and the other Elements betwixt them, one higher than another, and gave them different Stations and Qualities, yet ſo different as to be linked and concatenated together, *concordia diſcordiâ*, and all for the Concern and Benefit of the

whole. Thus for the Good of Men, hath the Lord aſſigned theſe different Stations of Rule and Subjection, though all of one Race, *Acts* xvii. raiſing from among Men ſome above the reſt; and clothed them with ſuch Authority, as hath ſome Repreſentment of himſelf, and accordingly communicating to them his own Name, *I have ſaid, you are Gods.* And the very Power that is in Magiſtracy to curb and puniſh theſe that deſpiſe it, the Apoſtle uſeth as a ſtrong and hard Cord to bind on the Duty of Obedience, a Cord of *Neceſſity.* But he adds another of a higher Neceſſity, that binds more ſtrongly and yet more ſweetly, that of *Conſcience: Wherefore ye muſt needs be ſubject not only for Wrath, but alſo for Conſcience ſake.*

Obſerve 1. This is the main Conſideration that cloſes the Diſcourſe, the great Cord that binds on and faſtens all the reſt; all the Arguments foregoing therefore, are mainly here to be preſt. " Have a re-
" verent and *conſcientious Reſpect* to the Ordinance of
" God in the Inſtitution of Government, and to the
" Providence of God in his Choice of thoſe particu-
" lar Perſons whom he calls to it. Contain thyſelf
" in thy own Station, and ſubmit to thoſe ſet higher
" by the Lord, in *Obedience to him*" This indeed is the only true Spring of all Obedience, both to God and to Men *for him*, and *according to his Ordinance.* To regulate the outward Carriage, without the living Principle of an enlightened and ſanctified Conſcience within, is to build without a Foundation. This is the thing God eyes moſt, he looks through the Surface of Mens Actions to the Bottom, follows them into their Source, examines from what Perſuaſives and Reaſons they flow; he ſees not only the Handle of the Dial, but all the Wheels and Weights of the Clock that are the Cauſe of its Motion, and accordingly judges both Men and their Actions to be good or evil as the inward Frame and ſecret Motions

tions of the Heart are in his own *Worſhip*. The Outſide of it may have the ſame Viſage and plauſible Appearance in a Multitude convened to it, and concurring in it, and no human Eye can trace a Difference, and yet, oh! what vaſt Difference doth God's Eye diſcover amongſt them. He ſees the Multitude of theſe that are driven to his Houſe, by the Power of Civil and Church Laws, or carried to it only with the Stream of Company and Cuſtom, and thoſe I fancy take up the moſt Room in our Churches. But he ſees here and there, where ſuch are in any Corner that worſhip him in Singleneſs of Heart, out of *conſcience* to his holy Command, and of their many Obligations, that dare not let paſs any Opportunity they can reach of doing Service to their Lord, and that dare not ſlight his Word. And thus coming for Conſcience ſake, they do preſent their Souls to receive his Word, give their Hearts up to receive the Impreſſion of it, put themſelves under it, to be ſtampt by it according to that *Rom.* vi. 17. *But ye have obeyed from the Heart that Form of Doctrine which was delivered you.* So likewiſe he ſees thoſe that bear his Name to his People, the Miniſters of his Word. If they preach conſtantly and live blameleſly, and are diligent and irreprovable in all the external Parts of their Walking; this laſt ſatisfies Mens Queſtions in their Inſpection and Viſitings: But God's Enquiry and Viſiting ſearches deeper; he asks from what Heart all this comes, if from a holy Conſcience of the Weight and high Importance of their holy Calling, and a faithful Reſpect to the Intereſt of their Maſter's Glory and his Peoples Souls. And thus, he, as ſupream Judge, ſits and conſiders the Proceedings of Judges and Magiſtrates, not only whether they do that which is juſt; for often they cannot, eaſily or ſafely, do otherwiſe; but whether they do it with regard to him, or not, that is, whether they judge righte-

righteouſly, for Conſcience ſake, or not; whether they do conſider him, as ſitting above them, when they ſit down upon the Bench or Seat of Juſtice, and *do indeed*, truly *ſpeak Righteouſneſs*, Pſal. lviii. Or if in Heart they work Wickedneſs, if they have any corrupt End, or Hearts that are not ſtraight, he ſits on their Heart and judges it. Or if this be done either for *baſe Gain*, or *vain Glory*, or by *Compulſion*, or outward Neceſſity, or Danger of Cenſure; or if it be this latter, an inward *Neceſſity of Conſcience*, which makes a true Willingneſs.

Thus People, if they obey for Wrath, which is, for Fear of the Magiſtrates Sword, more than for Conſcience of the Lord's Command, God accounts not this Obedience, but in his Judgment it goes for no better than Rebellion. It is to be feared, too many Magiſtrates, and others, have in this Nation embraced the Reformation, not at all for Conſcience ſake, but only for Wrath, Fear of Laws and Authority. But although we are not able to follow forth this Search to the full, that being the Lord's own Prerogative; yet, truly, where it is evident to us, that there is nothing of Conſcience, though in civil things, it may paſs, yet in Things that are peculiarly Matters of Conſcience in Religion, Men ought to be ſomewhat wary, according to the utmoſt of due diſcerning, and are poſſibly ſomewhat to blame in promiſcuous admitting of ſuch, whoſe Carriage, yea, whoſe Profeſſion and Religion ſpeaks aloud, that their Compliance was wholly conſtrained Obedience, only for Wrath, and not for Conſcience.

If civil Authority is to be obeyed moſt for Conſcience; then Church Authority, that is more ſymbolical with Conſcience, and hath nearer Reference to it, ought to aim moſt at that. *Conviction* and *Converſion* is our Work, and not *Conſtraint*, to bring People both by the Word, and by a Way of Diſcipline,

pline, ſuiting and backing it, to a Senſe of Sin, and ſpiritual Thoughts of God and his holy Law, that they may be ſubject more for Conſcience than for Wrath.

And ye People, labour more to find the Actings of that holy Fear of God, and Conſcience of his Will, in all your Ways; ſtudy to have an inward Light, a practical ſanctifying Light, directing you, and be not merely held in as Beaſts, by the Authority and Laws of Men, but learn to know, and be ſenſible of the ſovereign Authority of the Moſt High God and his Law, and to have reſpect unto all his Commandments. If this were once done, how regular a Motion would it keep amongſt all Superiors and Inferiors of all ſorts, in Families and States, the one commanding, the other obeying in God? It would be as ſweet Muſick in the celeſtial Quire of their Lives and Affairs. Right informing, and right moving Conſciences, would be as continual Teachers within, directing all in Obedience, and would make it both more conſtant, ſweet and pleaſant, as natural Motion; whereas, it is grievous and violent, that is from Wrath or outward Power, and therefore laſts not: As the *Iſraelites* worſhipped God aright while their good Judges lived, and run after Idols when they were removed.

Again: This ſame Obedience for *Conſcience* ennobles and ſublimates Mens Actions, even in civil Things, makes them have ſomewhat divine, turns all into Sacrifice to God, when all is done for God; even Servants and Children obeying Maſters and Parents; Subjects Magiſtrates, for his Commands ſake: And ſtill thinking, in the whole Courſe of their regular due Carriage, in their very Callings; "This I do "for God; my ordinary Labour and Works, and "my juſt Obedience to Men I offer up to him." This is the Philoſopher's Stone, that turns Actions

of

of lower Metal into Gold; *I ſet the Lord always before me*, Pſal. xvi.

Obſ. 2. Kings, and other Powers of the World, who are the Enemies, and ſometimes the enraged Perſecutors of our holy Religion, miſtake their Quarrel, and are very wrongfully miſprejudiced againſt it, and upon that falſe Suppoſition do hate and oppoſe it, ſuſpecting it as an Enemy to their Dignity and Authority; whereas there is nothing that doth ſo much aſſert their juſt Power as Religion doth. Civil Laws may ty the *Hands* and *Tongue* to their Obedience, but Religion binds all due Subjection to them upon the very *Conſciences* of their People. Therefore they are both ingrate and unwiſe, in uſing their Power againſt Religion, which it ſo much ſtrengthens. Their Power ſhould ſtrengthen it, both by way of due Return, to correſpond with it in that, and even for its own Intereſt, receiving a new Eſtabliſhment to itſelf by eſtabliſhing Religion. Even *Matchiavel.* that Maſter of irreligious Policy confeſſes that the Profeſſion of Religion is a Friend to Authority; but if the Shadow of it do any thing that way, we ſee, contrary to his profane Suppoſition, the Subſtance and Truth of it doth it much more.

Obſ. 3. If for Conſcience ſake, Subjection; then ſure in nothing againſt the true Rule of Conſcience, and prime Object of Conſcience, the Authority and Law of God. That is the firſt and higheſt, and the perpetual, unalterable Engagement to him, *binding Kings and Subjects, high and low.* And if they leave their Station, we ought to keep ours ſtill in a ſtraight Subjection to God. For the Extent of Friendſhip, and all other Relations, and of all Subjection and Obedience, is to be ruled and bounded, *uſque ad aras. Give to* Cæſar *the Things that are* Cæſar's, but nothing of God's; neither ours to give, nor his to receive.

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For, for this Cauſe pay you Tribute alſo. This the Apoſtle gives as a Sign of that confeſt Right that Magiſtrates have to the Subjection and Obedience of the People, that in all Nations this Homage and Acknowledgment is due to them, *Tribute paid:* Which it may be he the rather mentions, becauſe ſome Queſtion might be, what might Chriſtians do concerning this. However this, according to the Conſtitution of ſeveral Places, he takes as granted, to be not only lawful, but due to be rendred. Here we are not to inſiſt on the ſcanning of this; but certainly as the Power of a Magiſtrate is not in this, nor in any other thing, abſolute and unbounded, ſo the legal and juſt paying of Tribute and other Revenues by the People, argues their Engagement to theſe ſet over them, and is not as Wages to a mercenary Servant, but an *Honorary* due to their Place and Calling, who are the *Miniſters of God in civil Government.* So alſo convenient, yet liberal Maintenance to the Miniſters of God's own Houſe is their Right, yet not to enrich them; nor yet ought it to be given grudgingly, as undue; or ſuperciliouſly, as to Servants; but with the Chearfulneſs and Reſpect agreeable to the Lord's Servants, watching for their Souls.

All Tribute and Obedience ſtill relates to this, and is grounded on it, the Lord's Inſtitution of Power and Government, for the Good of Men. Tho' it ſometimes prove otherwiſe in the Exerciſe of it, yet the Ordinance is pure, and moſt wiſely ſuited to its End, from which the Sin and Corruption of Men turns it but too often; ſo that *one Man* rules over another to his Hurt, to the Hurt of both the Ruler himſelf and of the Ruled, *Eccl.* viii. 9. *There is a Time wherein one Man ruleth over another to his own Hurt*; each proving a Scourge to the other, in the juſt Judgment of God upon both for their Iniquities,

making a Fire from *Abimelech* to devour the Men of *Shechem*, and the Men of *Shechem* deal treacherouſly with *Abimelech*, Judg. ix. 20. Yet ſtill the Thing itſelf remains good. Many skilful Phyſicians may kill inſtead of curing, yet it is but a Caprice to decry all Remedies, and the Uſe of Things medicinal, that the God of Nature hath furniſh'd for that Uſe. Men may, and alas! moſt do prejudice their own Health, by either intemperate, or ſome way irregular Diet, yet this makes nothing againſt the continual Neceſſity and Uſe of Food, nor can diſſuade any from uſing it. Thus the Abuſes of Authority infringe not this, That Magiſtrates are a publick Good, yea, the unjuſt better than none, Tyranny better than Anarchy; there is ſome Juſtice done in the moſt unjuſt Government.

But thus they that are exalted to rule, ought to conſider who raiſed them, and for what they are raiſed, and ſo faithfully to do Juſtice. They are raiſed high, as the Stars are ſet in their Orbs for Influence and the Good of the inferior World, and as the Mountains which riſe above the Vallies, not to be Places of Prey and Ruin, but by the Streams they ſend out to refreſh them. So from Magiſtrates *Judgment ought to run down as Water, and Juſtice as a mighty Stream.* They ought to to conſider themſelves as *Miniſters*, though called *Magiſtrates* with Relation to the People, yet *Miniſters* in Relation to God, λειτέργοι θεᾶ and the People's in him, as the Word λειτέργοι imports, being conſtant Labourers for their Good. Even as the *Sun* is a *Miniſter*, God's Miniſter of Heat and Light to the Earth. Would they look up thus to God, it would make them look down on their Inferiors, not with the ill Aſpect of Pride and Cruelty, but the benign Looks of good Will, Fidelity and Vigilancy, for their Welfare, knowing that they are appointed for this very Uſe

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in the World; not referring to that which is neareſt here, and neareſt themſelves, *the receiving of Tribute*, but the remoteſt Good, which is the chief for which their Tribute and themſelves are appointed, the puniſhing of the Wicked, and Encouragement of the Good.

Render therefore to all their Dues, Tribute to whom Tribute, &c. The Apoſtle enlarges his Exhortation to the general Rule of Equity. The humble, upright Mind will willingly ſuit with this, and pay Reſpect to Men, in *Obedience to God*, and therefore *primarily* to him, which the moſt neglect. Honour and Fear are due to him as to our Father and Maſter, and yet where is it to be found? *If I be a Father where is mine Honour? and if I be a Maſter where is my Fear?* &c. *Mal.* i. The Tribute of Praiſe and Glory in all theſe is due, and ought not to be purloined, nor any Part detained, but how few are faithful in this? Much *uncuſtomed Goods* paſs among our Hands in the Courſe of our Lives, many things wherein we are not mindful to give Glory, entire Glory to God; but he cannot be deceived, if we go on, he will rake us in our quieteſt *Conveyance*, and all will be forfeited. We ſhall certainly loſe all, if all Glory return not to him. All that we have, and are, ſhould we daily and heartily offer up to him, from whom we have Life and Breath, and all things.

Owe no Man any thing, but to love one another, &c. That which the Apoſtle ſet before himſelf, as his own Study and Exerciſe, *Acts* xxiv. he doth in the latter Part of this Epiſtle ſet forth at large, as the Duty of every Chriſtian, to *keep a Conſcience void of Offence towards God and Men*. And having in the former part of it, treated amply and excellently of the Doctrine of Chriſtians Faith and Salvation, and aſcended to its higheſt Cauſe, he deſcends from thence to give the Rules of a Chriſtian Life. And

he reduces them to thoſe two, 1. To give the Lord his Due, which is, *ourſelves entire*; Our Bodies ought to be *a living Sacrifice*, Chap. xii. 1. and *that* they are not without the Soul. And it is Love in the Soul that offers up this whole burnt Offering to God, the Fire that makes it aſcend. 2. Towards Men likewiſe, Love is all, of which in many ſeveral Acts of it, he ſpake likewiſe in the former Chapter, *Ver.* 9. &c. And having inſerted an Exhortation to Subjection to human Authority, as a divine Inſtitution, he now returns to that main comprehenſive and univerſal Duty of Love, and paſſes fitly from the Mention of other particular Dues to Superiors, to this, as the general Due or ſtanding Debt, all Men owe one to another. So, I conceive, this is not intended for the further preſſing of that particular Duty of Subjection, by reducing it (ſeeming hard in itſelf) to the ſweet and pleaſant Rule, or Law of Love, but that he paſſes wholly from that particular to this common Duty, ſo as that is not excluded but comprehended here with the reſt, though not ſpecially aimed at; but a little Rivulet running a while in its own Channel, in the foregoing Diſcourſe, falls here in again to the main Current of the Doctrine of Love, begun in the former Chapter. And here he chuſes, adapting it to the Strain of the Diſcourſes immediately foregoing it, to expreſs this under the Notion of a Debt, *Owe nothing, but Love.*

1. Let other Debt be removed: *Owe nothing.* That is, "be not willing to continue Debtors of a-"ny thing to any, by undue retaining of ſuch "things, which being paid are not owing."

2. "This is a conſtant Debt, that you muſt ſtill "pay, and yet ſtill owe, *Love*;" and the *Reaſon* added, is moſt enforcing, that we be willing and continue, both *Payers*, and yet *Debtors* of it. The *Dueneſs* of it appears in this, that the *Law* requires it;

and

and the Compleatneſs of it, that it is *all* the Law requires. *Love is the fulfilling of the Law*, which is amplified in the two ſubſequent Verſes.

This is moſt fully true, take Love fully as it looks on its full Object, *God* and *Man*; and ſo it is the fulfilling of the whole Law that relates to thoſe two in its two Tables. Take it particularly as acting towards Men, (as here it is) and ſo it fulfils that Part of the Law, that whole Table that reſpects Man. The moſt of thoſe Commandments are expreſly here ſet down, and the Omiſſion of one is fully ſupplied by that Additament, *if there be any other*. Then again, it is cleared by the common Aim and Reſult of them all, to keep our Neighbour undamaged, and *that*, Love doth moſt ſurely and fully; therefore fulfils all. That negative, *work no Ill*, anſwers the Strain of all the Commandments, which is to defend our Neighbours from our *Ill*, being moſt of them ſuch, and all of them ſuch that are here ſpecified, yet both they, and this Sum of them, involving the contrary, working of all poſſible *Good* to our Neighbour, in which ſtill Love ſuits it, nothing being both more averſe from Wrong, and more active in Good, than Love, as the ſame Apoſtle hath it, 1 *Cor.* xiii. Beſides that, it cannot *do*, no, not ſo much as *think* Evil, it is naturally carried to Bounty and Kindneſs, and cannot ceaſe from doing Good, a Plant that is fruitful all the Year long.

The Apoſtle hath very good Authority for this Abridgment of the Law; our Saviour himſelf, *Matth.* xxii. 40. And He takes it out of the Books of the Law themſelves, and certifies *us*, that it is the Subſtance and Sum both of Law and Prophets. Were this Love abſolutely perfect, the fulfilling of the Law would be ſo too; and where it is ſincere, as the Apoſtle requires it, there is a ſincere and evangelical Obedience, or fulfilling of the Law.

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In the Text conſider, (1.) The Largeneſs of its Object. (2.) The Largeneſs of its Acting. (3.) The Height of its true Original.

1. So far as thou canſt acquit thyſelf, owe nothing elſe to any but Love, *owe that to all:* Not alike familiar Converſe neceſſarily to all, nor alike Meaſure of Beneficence, nor alike Degree of Love, but yet Love alike ſincere and real to all: Not either a falſe, or an empty fair Carriage, but holy Chriſtian Love, Love rooted in thy Heart, and ſpringing up in thy Actions, even towards all Men, as thy Opportunity and Ability ſerves thee, and their Condition requires of thee: Not hating nor deſpiſing any for their Poverty in Eſtate, or Deformity of Body, or Defects of Mind, nor for that which works moſt on Men, Injuries done to thyſelf; all they can do cannot give thee an *Acquittance*, or free thee of this *Debt* of Love, for thou art bound to another. This is the Rule of Jeſus Chriſt, and the Badge of Chriſtians, to love their very Enemies; but this, oh! how rare? How few attain it? Yea, how few endeavour it? On the contrary, it is by many given over as a deſperate impoſſible Buſineſs, they judging of it not according to that Spirit of Chriſt that is his, but according to the corrupt Rancour and Bitterneſs of their own natural perverſe Spirits. Yea, and too many diſdain it as a *Poorneſs* and *Sheepiſhneſs* of Spirit to ſuffer and forgive. Be it ſo, yet is it ſuch a *Sheepiſhneſs* as makes a Man like *Jeſus Chriſt, who as a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his Mouth*, when his Heart within was compaſſionate towards them, as appeared, when he opened it concerning them, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* This is true *Greatneſs* of Spirit to partake of *His*, that is, the higheſt and beſt of Spirits, and is the Spirit of *Meekneſs* and *Love*. How much is this above the common Spirit of the World?

World? Truly, baſe and poor, is that which is diſcompoſed and put out of Frame with every Touch, whereas this is mighty, and triumphs indeed over all Provocations and Injuries.

2. Let us conſider the *Largeneſs of its Acting*; it goes through the Law, fulfils it all. That Command that is *firſt* in the *ſecond Table*, that is not here expreſt, is it not Love that makes all concerned in it, to fulfil it? *That* produceth Mildneſs and Moderation in Superiors, and Faithfulneſs and willing Obedience in Inferiors; makes both Authority and Subjection ſweet and eaſy, where Love commands and Love obeys. And for the next, *Thou ſhalt not kill*, doth not Love (as the Sun Beams) put out the Fire by its divine Heat, eat out the earthly, yea, the infernal Fire of fixed Malice or raſh Anger, that burns naturally in the Hearts of Men? Such Anger is called *brutiſh*, Ezek. xxi. 31. *burning* or *brutiſh* (and on the contrary, *Prov.* xvii. 27. the Ambiguity is happy, *of an excellent* or *of a cool Spirit*, for the *cool Spirit* is ſo; cool from baſe Paſſion, but burning truly with this Love,) and then is by very ſmall, and many Times merely imaginary Cauſes, ſo eaſily blown up, that it flames forth into groſs Murders, or at leaſt ſuch Injuries and Violences, or Contentions and Revilings, as go in God's Account, and are writ down in his Book, for Murders. And he doth not misjudge, nor miſname things, but they are really what he accounts them. Love can generouſly paſs over theſe things, about which Folly and Pride makes ſuch a Noiſe. *Oh! can I bear this and that?* And thou wouldeſt, by ſo ſaying, ſpeak thy ſtout Heartedneſs. Fool, is this Stoutneſs and Strength? Is it not rather the greateſt Weakneſs to be able to bear nothing? Have not the weakeſt Perſons much of that Kind of Stoutneſs and Strength, who are the ſooneſt moved and diſquieted, Women and Children, and ſick or aged

aged Perſons? But *Love*, Chriſtian Love to thy Brother, makes the Mind truly ſtrong and compoſed, not eaſily ſtirred againſt him for every Trifle; nay, nor for greater Matters. Love can *endure* much, yea *all things*, ſays the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* xiii. hath Strength to *ſtand* under them, and ſtand firm, whereas baſe Minds, void of Love, break all to Pieces under a very ſmall Weight. *Bears all*, as the Supporters of a ſtrong and firm Building; or rather, as a Houſe, *covers all*, for ſo it ſignifies, doth not blaze abroad the Failings of Men; yea, it *hides* much, *covers a Multitude of Sins*, not only from the Eyes of others, but even from a Man's own Eyes, makes him not behold and look on thoſe things that might provoke him. Yea, it is ingenious and inventive of the faireſt Conſtructions of things, to take them by the beſt Side, in the favourableſt Senſe, and ſo long as there is any agreeable Way to interpret any thing favourably, will not have a hard Thought of it, *thinks no Ill*, as there it is. Not only hath not *active evil Thoughts* of Revenge, or returning Evil, but willingly doth not *judge ill* of what is done by others, and that might be ſo looked on as to provoke, οὐ λογίζεται, doth not *reckon* Wrongs ſo high as want of Charity moves the moſt to do, *ſets them low*, and, as a healthful Conſtitution, is ſweet itſelf, and reliſhes all things right. There is more true Pleaſure, and Content of Mind, in forgiving, than ever any Man found in Revenge. That is but a feveriſh Delight that Malice and Anger hath wrought, working perhaps greedily, but is indeed a Diſtemper. This Love is the very Root of Peace and Concord, a humble Grace, that is not *lifted up* and *inſolent*, as the Word there is, and ſo doth not breed Jars about Punctilio's; eſteems ſo well of others, and ſo meanly of itſelf, that it cannot well be croſt by any, in that Matter of undervaluing. But vain Spirits are puſt up with a little

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Approbation, and as eaſily kindled up with any Affront, or apprehended Diſgrace. Love is not lightly put out of Temper, as ſickly Conſtitutions, a Fit of a Fever or Ague, with any Blaſt or wrong Touch of Diet, it is of a ſtronger Digeſtion, and firmer Health.

Then for that, *not commit Adultery*, all things of that Kind, though they ſpring from a Kind of Love, yet not from this Love *from above*, but (as the Apoſtle *James* diſtinguiſhes Wiſdom) from the Love that is *ſenſual* and *deviliſh*. *Love* is not the true Name of it, but baſe and brutiſh *Luſt*. And generally all profane Societies, and Sortings of Men one with another, are moſt contrary to this pure Love. The Drunkards that are Cup-friends, as they are full of Jars, and have no Conſtancy, but are unſtable as that wherein their Friendſhip lies, their Liquor, are a vile deſpicable Society, not worthy of Men, much leſs of Chriſtians. This Sin hath affinity with Uncleanneſs, and is uſually ranked there. Right Love to a Tippler, is not to ſit down and guzzle with him, but to reprove and labour to reclaim him, and where that cannot be done, to avoid him. To wicked Perſons we owe not a Complacency or Delight, which is moſt contrary to this Love, but hating their Sin we owe them Love, and the deſiring and (as far as Love can) the procuring their Converſion and Salvation. Wicked Converſe cannot conſiſt with this Love which is the fulfilling of the Law, and a Combination for the breaking of it, and the joining their Strength together for that End. Love *rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but in the Truth*, makes not Men rejoice together in Sin; ſo foul unclean Affections, and a Society, in order to the gratifying them, is moſt contrary to it. True Love is moſt tender of the Chaſtity of others, and cannot abide an impure Thought in itſelf.

So in not Stealing. Love would be loth to enrich or advantage itſelf, upon the Damage of others in any Kind, it doth moſt faithfully and ſingly ſeek the Profit and Proſperity of our Neighbour, even as our own. And if this took Place, of how much Uſe were it in the World? But oh! it is rare. This *meum* and *tuum* is the grand Cauſe of the ill Underſtanding and Diſcords that are amongſt Men, when it is not managed by this Love but by Self-love.

And the *tendering and preſerving of the good Name of our Brethren*, is a proper and very remarkable Fruit of this Love, which is ſo far from forging falſe defaming Stories, that it will rather *excuſe*, if it may be done, or if not, will *pity* the real Failings of Men that tend to their Reproach; and on the contrary, will teach Men to rejoice in the good Carriage and good Eſteem of their Brethren as of their own.

In the End, Love works ſuch a *Complacency* in the Good of others, and ſuch a *Contentation* with our own Eſtate, that it moſt powerfully baniſhes that unruly Humour of *coveting*, which looks on the Condition of others with Envy, and on our own with Grudging and Diſcontent.

This Law of Love written within, doth not only rectify and order the Hands and Tongue, but the *Jealouſies*, the very *Stirrings of the Heart*; it corrects the uſual Diſorder of its Motion, and bars thoſe uncharitable inordinate Thoughts that do ſo abound and ſwarm in carnal Minds.

3. The *Original* of this Love is that other Love which correſponds to the other Part, the firſt and chief Point of the Law, our *Duty towards God.* Love to him is the Sum and Source of all Obedience; when the whole Soul and Mind is poſſeſt with that, then all is acceptable and ſweet that he commands; firſt, what he commands as immediately referable to himſelf,

ſelf, and then, what is the Rule of our Carriage to Men, as being preſcribed and commanded by him: For ſo, and no otherwiſe, is this Love the fulfilling of the Law, when it flows from that *firſt* Love, Love to God, whoſe Law it is that commands this other Love to Men. Some may have ſomewhat like it, by a Mildneſs and Ingenuity of Nature, being inoffenſive and well-willing towards all; but then only doth it fulfil the Law, when out of Regard to the Law of God it obeys, and obeys out of Love to him whoſe Law it is. So then, the Love of God in the Heart is the Spring of right and holy Love to our Neighbour, both, (1.) Becauſe in Obedience to him whom we love ſovereignly, we will love others ſincerely, becauſe he will have it ſo. That is Reaſon enough to the Soul poſſeſt, and taken up with his Love. It loves nothing, how lovely ſoever, but in him and for him, in Order and Subordination to his Love, and in Reſpect to his Will; and it loves any thing, how unlovely ſoever, taking it in that Contemplation. It loves not the dearcſt Friend but in God, and can love the hateſulleſt Enemy for him, *Amicum in Deo, & inimicum propter Deum*, Aug. His Love can beautify the moſt unamiable Object and make it lovely. He ſaith of a worthleſs undeſerving Man, or thy moſt undeſerving Enemy, "Love him "for my Sake, becauſe it pleaſes me;" that is Reaſon enough to one that loves him. (2.) There is that dilating, ſweetning Virtue in Love to God, that it can act no other Way to Men but as becomes Love. Baſe Self-love contracts the Heart, and is the very Root of all Sin, the chief Wickedneſs in our corrupt Nature; but the Love of God aſſimilates the Soul to him, makes it divine; and therefore bountiful, full of Love to all. So theſe two contradict not, *Love the Lord with all thy Heart*, and *thy Neighbour as thyſelf*. "If all our Love muſt go to God,

" what remains for our Neighbour?" Indeed all muſt go upwards, and be all placed on him, and from thence it is reſounded and regulated downwards to Men, according to his Will. But Self-love brings forth Pride, and Cruelty, and Covetouſneſs, and Uncleanneſs, and Diſdain of others, and all ſuch Kind of Monſters; ſo it is the main breaking of the Law.

All that can be ſaid, will not perſwade Men to this, till the Lord by his Love teach it and impreſs it on the Heart. Know that this is the Badge of Chriſt's Followers, and his great Rule and Law given to them; and if you will follow him, that you may come to be where he is, then ſtudy this, That as our Lord Chriſt loved us, ſo alſo we ought to love one another.

SERMON XI.

PREFACE.

GREAT and various are the Evils that lodge within the Heart of Man. Hence proceed *evil Thoughts*, *Adulteries*, *Murders*, and many other Miſchiefs, as our Saviour ſpecifies there; they come forth apace, and yet the Heart is not emptied of them. But was this Heart thus at firſt, when it came newly forth of the Hands of its Maker? Surely, no: *Man was made upright, but he found out many Inventions.* Soon did the Heart find the Way to corrupt itſelf; but to renew itſelf, is as impoſſible as to have been the Author of its own Creation. Eaſily could it deface the precious Characters of God's Images

Image, but it paſſes the Art of Men and Angels to reſtore them. Only the Son of God, who for that Purpoſe took on him our Nature, can make us, according to the Apoſtle's Phraſe, *partakers of the divine Nature.* It is he alone that can baniſh theſe unclean Spirits, and keep Poſſeſſion that they return no more. Have not they made a happy Change of Gueſts, that have thoſe infernal Troops turned out of Doors, and the King of Glory fixing his Abode within them! This is the Voice of the Goſpel, *Lift up your Heads, ye Gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlaſting Doors, that the King of Glory may enter in.* But ſmall is the Number of thoſe that open where this Voice is daily ſounded. Yea, ſome there are that grow worſe under the frequent Preaching of the Word, as if Sin were emulous, and, as is ſaid of Virtue, would grow by Oppoſition. The Truth is, too many of us turn theſe ſerious Exerciſes of Religion into an idle Divertiſement. Take heed that Formality, and Cuſtom, and Novelty, do not often help to fill up many Rooms in our Church. It were indeed a Breach of Charity, to entertain the Fulneſs of your Aſſemblies with ill Conſtruction; no, it is to be commended. But would to God we were more careful to ſhew our Religion in our Lives, to ſtudy to know better the Deceits and Impoſtures of our own Hearts, and to gain daily more Victory over our ſecret and beſt beloved Sins. Let our Intentions then be to meet with Chriſt here, and to admit him gladly to dwell and rule within us. If he conquer our inward Enemies, thoſe without ſhall not be able to hurt us. If he deliver us from our ſinful Luſts, he will ſtill our own diſtruſtful Fears. And that ſuch may be the Fruits of our Meeting, let us turn ourſelves towards the Throne of Grace, with humble Prayer, in the Name of Jeſus Chriſt the Righteous.

Pſal xxiv. 7.

PSAL.

PSAL. LXXVI. 10.

Surely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee: The Remainder of Wrath ſhalt thou reſtrain.

WHat *Man is this* (ſaid the Paſſengers in the Ship) *that even the Winds and the Sea obey him?* Chriſt ſuddenly turns a great Tempeſt into a greater Calm, *Matth.* viii. 27. Surely thoſe are no ordinary Words of Command, that ſwelling Waves and boiſterous Winds, in the midſt of their Rage, are forc'd to hear, and taught to underſtand and obey them. Therefore the holding of the Seas in the hollow of his Hand, the bridling of the Wind, and riding upon the Wings of it, we find peculiarly attributed to the Almighty. But no leſs, if not more wonderful is another of his Prerogatives, to wit, His Sovereignty over all Mankind, over the divers and ſtrange Motions of the Heart of Man. Admirable is it to govern thoſe, both in reſpect of their Multitude and Irregularity. Conſider we what Millions of Men dwell at once upon the Face of the Earth; and again, what Troops of ſeveral Imaginations will paſs through the Fancy of any one Man, within the Compaſs of one Day. 'Tis much to keep Eye upon them, and to behold them all at once, but far more to command and controul them all; yet if they were all loyal and willingly obedient, were they tractable and eaſily curbed, it were more eaſy for us to conceive how they might be governed. But to bound and over-rule the unruly Hearts of Men, the moſt of whom continually are either plotting or acting Rebellion againſt their Lord, to make them all concur and meet at laſt in one End, cannot be done but by a Power and a Wiſdom that are both infinite. That God (whoſe Name we often mention, but ſeldom think on his Excellency) is alone the abſolute Monarch

Monarch of Mens Hearts, and the Ruler of all their Motions. He hath them limited while they ſeem moſt free, and works his own Glory out of their Attempts, while they ſtrive moſt to diſhonour him. *Surely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee*, &c.

The Pſalm is made up of theſe two different Sorts of Thoughts, the one ariſing out of *particular Experience*, and the other out of a *general Doctrine*. Theſe drawn from Experience are ſet down in the Verſes preceeding the Text, and in it. With thoſe that follow is the *Doctrine*, with a *Duty* annexed to it; which two are Faith's main Supporters. Bypaſt Particulars verify the Doctrine, and the Generality of the Doctrine ſerves to explain the particular Experiences to all wiſe Obſervers. There is not a Treaſure of the *Merits* of Saints in the Church, (as ſome *dream*) but there is a Treaſure of the precious *Experiences* of the Saints, which every Believer hath Right to make uſe of; and theſe we ſhould be vers'd in, that we may have them in readineſs at hand, in time of need, and know how to uſe them, both to draw Comfort from them to ourſelves, and Arguments to uſe with God.

The Words contain clearly two Propoſitions, both of them concerning the *Wrath of Man*. The former hath the Event of it, *Surely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee:* The latter, the Limitation of it, *The Remainder of Wrath thou wilt reſtrain.*

That the Virtues and Graces of Men do praiſe the Lord, all Men eaſily underſtand, for they flow from him, his Image and Superſcription is upon them, and therefore no wonder if of them he has from them a Tribute of Glory. Who knows not that Faith praiſes him? *Abraham believed and gave Glory to God.* Good Works, the Fruits of Faith, praiſe him too, *Herein is your heavenly Father glorified* (ſays our Saviour) *that you bring forth much Fruit.* But that the

the inordinate Wrath of Man ſhould praiſe him, may ſeem ſomewhat ſtrange. Were it God's own Wrath, (as Wrath is attributed to him in Scripture) that might praiſe him, for it is always moſt juſt; or were it a due and moderate Anger of Man, upon juſt Cauſe, that were fit for praiſing him too, in deſpite of the *Stoicks*. But that *wicked* and *diſordered Wrath*, (which is undoubtedly here meant) that the *Wrath of Men*, that is both uncomely and diſhonourable for themſelves, (tho' they think otherwiſe) that even ſuch a Wrath ſhould honour God, and praiſe him, argues well that he hath good Right to Praiſes, when every thing, even things that ſeem contrary to his Nature, as well as to his Law, do pay them to him: And that he hath great Power and Wiſdom who obtains what is due to him, even from thoſe Perſons and Things, that of themſelves are moſt unwilling and unfit to pay it. This is the excellent Skill of his Wiſdom, to draw that which ſhall go into the making up of the precious Compoſition of his Praiſe out of this *Poiſon*, for ſo the Word, here uſed for *wrathful Heat*, doth ſometimes ſignify. And this Wrath often proves ſo, a deadly Poiſon both to thoſe it is incens'd againſt, and to the very Breaſt that breeds it, and wherein it is kindled.

But for the clearer underſtanding of this, I conceive it will be requiſite to conſider more diſtinctly: (1.) What this *Wrath of Man* is. (2.) How it can *praiſe God*. And laſtly, The *Infallibility* of this Event, *Surely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee.*

In the 148th *Pſalm*, where *David* ſummons the Creatures to meet in that Song of Praiſe, to keep that full Conſort, he calls not only the Heavens, and the Inhabitants of it, Angels and Lights, but theſe of the lower World to bear their Part in it; and not only Men, Beaſts, Cattle, creeping Things, and the flying Fowl, but theſe Creatures that do moſt

moſt reſemble this Wrath here ſpoken of, Fire, ſtormy Tempeſt, and Dragons, *&c.* The Tenor of the Pſalm doth ſhew, that by the *Wrath of Man* is to be underſtood "the undue Rage of evil and ungodly "Men againſt thoſe whom God owns for his People." The Word here uſed ſignifies a *hot* or *inflaming* Wrath; and indeed ſuch is the feveriſh diſtempered Anger of the Church's Enemies. And as too much Heat is an Enemy to ſolid Reaſon, this hot Wrath of theirs makes them incapable of wiſe Deliberation in themſelves, and inflexible to the good Advice of others. 'Tis true, they take Counſel how to execute their Wrath, as we ſhall hear anon; but they take no Counſel that may cool it. Anger deſcribed by its material Cauſe, is called a boiling of the Blood about the Heart; but this ariſeth from the Apprehenſion of ſomething offenſive, kindling a Deſire of Revenge. Now it is a Wonder what the Powers of the World find in Chriſt and his harmleſs Flock that can incenſe them. St. *James* ſays of the Tongue, *that it is ſet on Fire of Hell.* The ſame is the Original of this Wrath, *Why doth the Heathen rage?* ſaith the Pſalmiſt. That is, not only *to what Purpoſe?* intimating that it is a fruitleſs Rage, and void of Succeſs, in regard of God's Power. But *why?* that is, *upon what occaſion?* checking the Rage as groundleſs and without Cauſe, in regard of Chriſt and his Church's Innocency. The Cauſe is only within themſelves, to wit, that unhappy Antipathy of the Serpent's Seed againſt the Seed of the Woman. Thus this Wrath of Man is the cauſeleſs, malicious Enmity of the Wicked againſt the Church of God. And under the Name of this Paſſion I take to be here compriſed likewiſe all the Attendants of it, all their crafty Complotments and Devices for the acting of their Wrath. As there is Mention of the Nation's Rage againſt Chriſt, in the 2d *Pſalm*, ſo likewiſe of

the Conſultations of thoſe that are of Quality fit for it, *The Rulers take Counſel together.* Further, this Wrath is not barely their inward Fire, but the Vent of it flames into cruel and outrageous Practices, including likewiſe all the Inſtruments they make uſe of. And of all theſe 'tis true, that God ſhall gain Glory by them, Surely *the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee.*

The *Wrath of Man* (ſays the Apoſtle) *accompliſheth not the Righteouſneſs of God*; how then can it accompliſh his Praiſes? And this is the ſecond Thing propounded.

Are Grapes gathered of Thorns, or Figs of Thiſtles? Surely no; therefore I called this Praiſe, not the Fruit or proper Effect of Man's Wrath, but the Event or Conſequent of it, by the Efficacy of Divine Providence. *The Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee.* "The Uſe which thou wilt make of it ſhall tend to "thy Praiſe. Thou wilt produce ſuch Effects from "it, both in the Church and upon thine Enemies, "when thou ſuffereſt thy Wrath to break forth, as "ſhall furniſh more Matter of thy Praiſes than if "thou hadſt altogether reſtrained it." To inſtance this in ſome few Particulars.

'Tis the Fury of the Church's Enemies that has made known to the World the invincible *Courage and Patience of the Saints.* Thoſe Ages that have been moſt monſtrous in Perſecution, have moſt of all grac'd Chriſtianity. Had there been no perſecuting Emperors, who ſhould have heard of thoſe primitive Martyrs, that triumph'd over the Cruelty of their Torments? Were there no Perſecution, nor Peril, nor Sword, againſt Believers, we ſhould not have heard the Apoſtle ſay immediately after the Mention of thoſe, *In all theſe we are more than Conquerors.* They could not have been ſo much as *Conquerors*, had there been no *Conflict.*

Again,

Again, as the Work of [illegible] is the
invincible Patience [illegible] is the
immortal Spi[illegible]
ful how [illegible]
hath often been [illegible]
in reſpect of the [illegible]
ſo many Lions [illegible]
ready to [illegible]
tends ſolely [illegible]
look the Church [illegible]
phet, it is the [illegible]
Lord [illegible]
us, then [illegible]
Monarchies and Kingdoms [illegible]
riſen with ſo much [illegible]
and been buried [illegible]
and ſilver-bodied [illegible]
Metal as it were [illegible]
Cauſe of the Fall [illegible]
the Kingdom of Jeſus Chriſt [illegible]
World, and expoſed [illegible]
all Ages, ſtands firm [illegible]
is a common Emblem [illegible]
all Quarters, and upon [illegible]
ing in the Middle [illegible]
This fitly reſembles [illegible]
to be the Sport [illegible]
ſtabliſhed, that all [illegible]
Hell cannot prevail [illegible]
Church's Enemies [illegible]
do her, the more [illegible]
Power of her Lord [illegible]
Man doth [illegible]

When was the Church [illegible]
Wrath? To ſay nothing [illegible]
did not thoſe wicked [illegible]
have made the Chriſtian [illegible]

drowned her, newly born, in Floods of her own Blood? And in latter Ages, who knows not the Cruelties that have been practiſed by the *Turk* in the Eaſt, and the proud Prelate of *Rome* in the Weſt? by which ſhe hath ſometimes been brought to ſo obſcure and low a Point, that if you can follow her in Hiſtory, 'tis by the Tract of her Blood; and if you would ſee her, 'tis by the Light of thoſe Fires in which her Martyrs have been burnt. Yet hath ſhe ſtill come through, and ſurvived all that Wrath, and ſtill ſhall, till She be made perfectly triumphant.

Further: *Man's Wrath* tends to God's Praiſe in this, " That God, giving way to it, does ſo manage " it by his ſublime Providence, that it often directly " croſſes their own Ends, and conduces manifeſtly " to his." *Pharaoh* thought that his Dealing more cruelly with the *Jews* in their Tasks and Burdens was Wiſdom: *Let us work wiſely* (ſays he.) But whereas their ordinary Servility was become familiar to them, and they were tamed to it, that ſame Acceſſion of new Tyranny did prepare and diſpoſe the *Iſraelites* for a Deſire of Departure, and their Departure made way for *Pharaoh*'s Deſtruction. Undigeſtible Inſolency and Rage, haſtening to be great, makes Kingdoms caſt *them* off, which would have been far longer troubled with their Wickedneſs, had it been more moderate. Surely then the Wrath of Man commends the Wiſdom of God, when He makes him by that contrive and afford the Means of his own Downfal. *Job* xviii. 7. *The Steps of his Strength ſhall be ſtraitned, and his own Counſel ſhall caſt him down*, ſays *Bildad*. And that is a ſad Fall; as that Eagle that was ſhot with an Arrow trimmed with her own Feathers.

But to cloſe this Point. It is out of all Queſtion, that the deſerved Puniſhment of Man's unjuſt Wrath, doth always glorify the *Juſtice of God*, and the more

he

he gives way to their Wrath, the more notable ſhall be both their Puniſhment and the Juſtice of it. And though God ſeems neglective of his People and of his Praiſe, while Man's Wrath prevails, yet the Truth is, he never comes too late to vindicate his Care of both; and when he defers longeſt, the Enemy pays dear Intereſt for the Time of Forbearance. In his eternal Decree, he reſolved to permit the Courſe of Man's Wrath for his own Glory, and when the Period which he hath fixed is come, he ſtops Man's Wrath, and gives Courſe unto the Juſtice of his own. Nor is there then any Poſſibility of eſcaping; he will right himſelf, and be known by executing Judgment. Surely *the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee.* And that is the third Thing propounded, the *Infallibility of the Event.*

The Author of Nature governs all his Creatures, each in a ſuitable way to the Nature he hath given them. He maintains in ſome things a *natural Neceſſity* of working, *Contingency* in others; and in others *Liberty.* But all of them are ſubject to this *Neceſſity* of effecting inevitably his eternal Purpoſes; and this Neceſſity is no way repugnant to the due Liberty of Man's Will. Some entertain and maintain the Truth; ſome plot, others act and execute againſt it; ſome pleaſe themſelves in a wiſe Neutrality, and will appear ſo indifferent, that it would ſeem they might be accepted of all Sides for Judges of Controverſies. And all theſe find no leſs Liberty to wind and turn themſelves whither they pleaſe, than if no higher Hand had the winding of them. Shall not only the *Zeal* of the Godly, but even the *Wrath* of the Enemy, and the *cold Diſcretion* of the neutral, *all* tend to his Praiſe whoſe ſupream Will hath a ſecret, but a ſure and infallible Sway in all their Actions? Whilſt ſome Paſſengers ſit, ſome walk one Way, ſome another, ſome have their Faces towards their Jour-

Journey's End, ſome their Back turned upon it, this wiſe Pilot does moſt skilfully guide the Ship to arrive with them all, at his own Glory. Happy they that propound and intend his Glory as he himſelf does, for in them ſhall the Riches of his Mercy be glorified. They that oppoſe him, loſe this Happineſs, but he is ſure not to loſe his Glory for all that, to wit, the Glory of his Juſtice. His right Hand ſhall find out all his Enemies; *ſurely the Wrath of Man ſhall praiſe thee.*

The Conſideration of this Truth, *thus* in ſome Meaſure unfolded, may ſerve to juſtify the truly wiſe Diſpenſation of God againſt our imaginary Wiſdom. Were the Matter referred to our modelling, we would aſſign the Church conſtant Peace and Proſperity for her Portion, and not conſent that the leaſt Air of Trouble ſhould come near her. We would have no Enemies to moleſt her, nor ſtir againſt her, or if they did ſtir, we would have them to be preſently repreſt, and theſe, in our Judgment, would be the faireſt and moſt glorious Tokens of *his* Love and Power, whoſe Spouſe ſhe is. But this carnal Wiſdom is Enmity againſt God, and to the Glory of God, which riſes ſo often out of the Wrath of his Enemies. Had God cauſed *Pharaoh* to yield at the very firſt, to the Releaſe of his People, where had been the Fame of thoſe miraculous Judgments in *Egypt*, and Mercies on the *Iſraelites*, the one ſetting out and illuſtrating the other? Where had been that Name and Honour that God ſays he would gain to himſelf, and that he did gain out of *Pharaoh*'s final Deſtruction, making that ſtony-hearted King, and his Troops, *ſink like a Stone in the Waters*, as *Moſes* ſings? Obſerve his proud Boaſtings immediately foregoing his Ruin, *I will purſue*, ſays he, *I will overtake, I will divide the Spoil, my Luſt ſhall be ſatisfied on them; I will draw my Sword, and my Hand ſhall de-*

deſtroy them; ſoon after, the Sea quenches all this Heat. Commonly big Threatnings are unhappy *Preſages* of very ill Succeſs. That Hiſtorian ſays well of God*, *God ſuffers no other to think highly of himſelf, but himſelf alone.* And indeed, as he abhors theſe Boaſtings, ſo he delights in the abaſing of the loſty Heart whence they flow, and it is his Prerogative to gain Praiſe to himſelf out of their Wrath, *Haſt thou an Arm like God* (ſays the Lord to *Job*) *then look upon the proud and bring them low*, Job xl. 9. 11. When *Sennacherib* came up againſt *Jeruſalem*, his Blaſphemies and Boaſtings were no leſs vaſt and monſtrous than the Number of his Men and Chariots; good *Hezekiah* turned over the Matter unto God, ſpreading the Letter of Blaſphemies before him; God undertook the War, and aſſured *Hezekiah* that the *Aſſyrian* ſhould not ſo much as ſhoot an Arrow againſt the City, *but return the ſame Way he came*, 2 *Kings* xix. And the Deliverance there promiſed and effected, is conceived to have been the Occaſion of penning this very *Pſalm*. Surely when an Angel did in one Night ſlay 185000 in their Camps, that Wrath and thoſe Threats, tended exceedingly to the Praiſe of the God of *Iſrael*. The Hook that he put in *Sennacherib*'s Noſtrils, (as the Hiſtory ſpeaks) to pull him back again, was more remarkable than the Fetters would have been, if he had tied him at home, or hindred his March with his Army. *Herodot.*

Who is he then that will be impatient becauſe of God's Patience, and judge him ſlack in Judgment, while the Rage of the Wicked prevails a while? Know that he is more careful of his own Glory than we can be, and the greater Heghth Man's Wrath ariſes to, the more Honour ſhall ariſe to him out of it.

Did

* *Deus neminem alium, quàm ſeipſum, ſinit de ſe magnificè ſentire.*

Did not his Omnipotency ſhine brighter in the Flames of that Furnace into which the Children were caſt, than if the King's Wrath had been at firſt cooled? Certainly, the more both it and the Furnace had their Heat augmented, the more was God glorified. *Who is that God* (ſaith he blaſphemouſly and proudly,) *that can deliver you out of my Hands?* a Queſtion indeed highly diſhonouring the Almighty, but ſtay till the real Anſwer come, and not only ſhall that Wrath praiſe him, but that very ſame Tongue, tho' inured to Blaſphemy, ſhall be taught to bear a main Part in the Confeſſion of theſe Praiſes. Let *Julian.* that Apoſtate Emperor go taunting the Head and tormenting the Members of that myſtical Body, his cloſing with νενίκηκας γαλιλαῖε. *Thou haſt overcome,* O Galilean, (meaning Chriſt) ſhall help to verify that. Whether its Courſe be ſhorter or longer, Man's Wrath ends always in God's Praiſe. In like Manner, the cloſing of the Lions Mouth ſpake louder to his Praiſe that ſtopt them, than if he had ſtopt *Daniel*'s Enemies in the Beginning of their wicked Deſign. So hot was their Rage, that the King's favourable Inclination to *Daniel* (of which, in other Caſes, Courtiers uſe to be ſo devout Obſervers) yea his conteſting and pleading for him did profit him nothing, but they hurried their King to the Execution of their unjuſt Malice, though themſelves were convinced, that nothing could be found againſt him, but only concerning the Law of his God. *Dan.* vi. 14. It is ſaid, *he ſet his Heart upon him to deliver him, and laboured to do it till the going down of the Sun,* and then thoſe Counſellors, and Counſels of Darkneſs overcame him. But upon this black Night of their prevailing Wrath, followed immediately a bright Morning of Praiſes to *Daniel*'s God. When the Lions that were ſo quiet Company all Night to *Daniel,* made ſo quick a Breakfaſt of thoſe accurſed Cour-

Courtiers that had malicioufly accuſed him. *Even ſo let thine Enemies periſh, O Lord, and let thoſe that love thee, be as the Sun when he goes forth in his Might.*

The other Propoſition concerns the limiting of this Wrath. *The Remainder of Wrath thou wilt reſtrain.*

To take no Notice, for the preſent, of divers other Readings of theſe Words, the Senſe of them, as they are here very well rendred, may be briefly this, That whereas the Wrath of Man to which God gives way, ſhall praiſe him, the reſt ſhall be *curbed* and *bound up*, as the Word is, no more of it ſhall break forth than ſhall contribute to his Glory. Here ſhould be conſidered divers Ways and Means, by which God uſeth to ſtop the heady Courſe of Man's Wrath, and hinder its proceeding any further. But only,

Let us take out of it this Leſſon, "That the moſt "compendious way to be ſafe from the Violence of "Men, is to be in Terms of Friendſhip with God." Is it not an incomparable Privilege to be in the Favour, and under the Protection of one whoſe Power is ſo tranſcendent, that no Enemy can ſo much as ſtir without his Leave? Be perſwaded then, Chriſtians, in theſe Dangers that are now ſo near us, every one to draw near to him; remove what may provoke him; let no reigning Sin be found either in your Cities or in your Villages, for he is a holy God. Is it a Time to multiply Provocations now, or is it not rather high time to be humbled for the former? What ſhameleſs Impiety is it, to be now licentious or intemperate? To be proud, to oppreſs or extort? To profane God's Day, and blaſpheme his Name? All theſe Sins, and many others, abound amongſt us, and that avowedly. Without Abundance of Repentance for theſe we ſhall ſmart, and the Wrath of our Enemies, though unjuſt in them, ſhall praiſe

God in our juſt Puniſhment; though doubtleſs, he will own his Church, and be praiſed likewiſe in the final Puniſhment of their Wrath, that riſe againſt it. There is a remarkable Expreſſion in the xcix. *Pſalm*, of God's Dealing with his People, *he was favourable to them, though he took Vengeance on their Inventions.* A good Cauſe and a Covenant with God, will not ſhelter an impenitent People from ſharper Correction. It is a ſad Word God ſpeaks by his Prophet to his own People, *I myſelf* (ſays he) *will fight againſt you.* A dreadful Enemy! and none indeed truly dreadful but he. O prevent his Anger and you are ſafe enough. If perverſe Sinners will not hear, yet let thoſe that are indeed Chriſtians mourn in ſecret, not only for their own Sins, but let them beſtow ſome Tears likewiſe upon the Sins of others. Labour to appeaſe the Wrath of God, and he will either appeaſe Man's Wrath, or howſoever, will turn it jointly to our Benefit and his own Glory. Let the Fear of the moſt high God, who hath no leſs Power over the ſtrongeſt of his Enemies than over the meaneſt of his Servants; let his Fear, I ſay, poſſeſs all our Hearts, and it will certainly expel that ignoble and baſe Fear of the Wrath of Man. See how the Prophet oppoſes them in that 8th of *Iſaiah*, *Fear not their Fear* (ſays he) *nor be afraid, but ſanctify the Lord, and let him be your Fear, and let him be your Dread*; fear not, but fear. This holy Fear begets the beſt Courage; the Breaſt that is moſt filled with it, abounds moſt in true Magnanimity. Fear thus, that you may be confident, not in yourſelves, though your Policy and Strength were great, *(curſed is the Man that truſteth in Man, and maketh Fleſh his Arm)* but confident in that God, who is too wiſe and vigilant to be ſurprized, too mighty to be foiled, and too rich to be out-ſpent in Proviſion; who can ſuffer his Enemy to come to the higheſt Point of apparent Advantage,

vantage, without any Inconvenience, yea, with more Renown in his Conqueſt. And ſo a Chriſtian who is made once ſure of this (as eaſily he may) is little careful about the reſt, his Love to God prevailing over all his Affections, makes him very indifferent what becomes of himſelf or his deareſt Friends, ſo God may be glorified. What though many fall in the Quarrel (which God avert) yet it is ſufficient that Truth in the End ſhall be victorious. Have not the Saints in all Ages been content to convey pure Religion to Poſterity, in Streams of their own Blood, not of others? Well, hold faſt by this Concluſion, that God can limit and bind up the moſt violent Wrath of Man, that though it ſwell it will not break forth. The ſtiffeſt Heart, as the Current of the moſt impetuous Rivers, is in his Hand, to appoint its Channels, and turn it as he pleaſeth. Yea, it is he that hath ſhut up the very Sea with Bars and Doors, and ſaid, *Hitherto ſhalt thou come and no further, here ſhall thy proud Waves be ſtayed*, Job xxxviii. 10, 11. To ſee the Surges of a rough Sea come in towards the Shore, a Man would think that they were haſtening to ſwallow up the Land, but they know their Limits, and are beaten back into Foam. Though the Waves thereof toſs themſelves as angry at their Reſtraint, yet the ſmall Sand is a Check to the great Sea, *yet can they not prevail, though they roar, yet can they not paſs over it*, ſays *Jeremiah* v. 22.

The Sum is this: What God permits his Church's Enemies to do, is for his own further Glory; and reſerving this, there is not any Wrath of Man ſo great, but he will either ſweetly calm it, or ſtrongly reſtrain it. *To him be praiſe*, &c.

SER-

SERMON XII.

PSAL. CXII. 7.

He ſhall not be afraid of evil Tidings; his Heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.

ALL the ſpecial Deſigns of Men agree in this, They ſeek Satisfaction and Quietneſs of Mind, that is, Happineſs. This then is the great Queſtion, Who is the happy Man? It is here reſolved, *Ver.* 1. *Bleſſed is the Man that feareth the Lord, that delighteth in his Commandments.*

The Bleſſedneſs is unfolded as a rich Landskip, that we may view the well mixed Colours, the Story and Tiſſue of it, through the whole *Alphabet* in capital Letters. And take all and ſet them together, it is a moſt full compleat Bleſſedneſs, not a Letter wanting to it.* Amongſt the reſt, *that* we have in theſe Words is of a greater Magnitude and Brightneſs than many of the reſt, *He ſhall not be afraid of evil Tidings.*

Well may it begin with a *Hallelujah*, a Note of Praiſe to Him in whom this Bleſſedneſs lies. O what a wretched Creature were Man, if not provided to ſuch a Portion, without which is nothing but Diſappointment; and thence the racking Torment and Vexation of a diſquieted Mind, ſtill purſuing ſomewhat that he never overtakes.

The firſt Words are the Inſcription, *The Bleſſedneſs of that Man!* &c. So the Particulars follow: Where outward Bleſſings are ſo ſet, as that they look and lead

* This Pſalm in the *Hebrew* conſiſts of 22 ſhort Verſes, each of which begins with the Letters of the Alphabet in their Order, till they are all ended. No one Letter is here omitted, as is the Caſe in the 25th Pſalm where the ſame Order is obſerved.

lead higher, pointing at their End, the *infinite Goodneſs* whence they flow, and whither they return and carry along with them this happy Man.

And theſe Promiſes of outward Things are often evidently accompliſh'd to the Righteous, and their Seed after them, and that commonly after they have been brought very low. But when it is otherwiſe with them, they loſe nothing. 'Tis good for *many*, yea, 'tis good for *all* the Godly that have leſs of theſe lower Things, to raiſe their Eye to look after higher, the Eye of *all*, both of theſe that are held ſomewhat ſhort, and for thoſe that have Abundance in the World.

Theſe temporal Promiſes were more abounding and more frequently fulfilled, in their very kind, in the Times of the Law, yet ſtill the Right is conſtant, and all Ages do give clear Examples of the Truth of this Word. Where it is thus, 'tis a Bleſſing created by its Aſpect to this Promiſe, and ſo differs from the Proſperity of ungodly Men; and where 'tis otherwiſe with the Righteous and their Seed, 'tis no Shift, but a moſt ſolid Comfort, to turn their Eyes to a higher Compenſation.

But howſoever it go, this ſtill holds, *He ſhall not be afraid of evil Tidings.* Notwithſtanding the hardeſt News that can come to his Ears, of any thing that concerns himſelf or his Children, or the reſt of God's Children in his Charge in the World, *His Heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.*

Firſt, let us take a little of the Character of this bleſſed Man. Who is it that is thus undaunted? *The Man that feareth God.*

All the Paſſions are but ſeveral Ebbings and Flowings of the Soul, and their Motions are the Signs of its Temper. Which way it is carried, *that* is mainly to be remarked by the beating of its Pulſe. If our Deſires, and Hopes, and Fears, be in the Things of

of this World, and the Intereſt of Fleſh, this is their Diſtemper and Diſorder, the Soul is in a continual Fever: But if they move Godwards, then is it compos'd and calm, in a good Temper and healthful Point, fearing and loving him, deſiring him, and nothing but him, waiting for him, and truſting in him. And when any one Affection is right, and in a due Aſpect to God, all the reſt are ſo too: For they are radically one, and he is the Life of that Soul that is united to him; and ſo in him it moves in a peculiar ſpiritual Manner, as all do naturally in the Dependence of their natural Life, on him that is the Fountain of Life.

Thus we have here this Fear of God, as often elſewhere, ſet out as the very Subſtance of Holineſs and Evidence of Happineſs. And that we may know there is nothing either baſe or grievous in this Fear, we have joined with it, *Delight* and *Truſt*; *delighteth greatly in his Commandments*: Which is that Badge of *Love to him*, to obſerve them, and that with Delight, and with exceeding great Delight. So then, the Fear is not that which Love caſts out, but that which Love brings in. This Fear follows and flows from Love, a Fear to offend, whereof nothing ſo tender as Love; and that, in reſpect of the Greatneſs of God, hath in it withal a humble Reverence. There is in all Love a kind of Reverence, a cautious and reſpective Warineſs towards the Party loved; but eſpecially in this, where not only we ſtand in a lower Relation, as Children to our Father, but the Goodneſs that draws our Love doth infinitely tranſcend our Meaſures and Reach, therefore there is a *rejoicing with trembling*, and an awful Love, the *fearing the Lord and his Goodneſs*, Hoſ. iii. *ult.* This both *Fear* and *Truſt*, the Heart touch'd by the Spirit of God, as the Needle touch'd with the Loadſtone,

ſtone, looks ſtraight and ſpeedily to God, yet ſtill *with trembling*, being filled with this holy Fear.

That delighteth] Oh! this is not only to do them, but to do them with Delight; ſomewhat within is connatural and ſymbolical: Yea, this very Law itſelf is writ within, not ſtanding as a hard Task-maſter over our Head, but impreſs'd within as a ſweet Principle in our Hearts, and working from thence naturally. This makes a Soul find Pleaſure in purging out of ſenſual Pleaſures, and Eaſe in doing Violence to corrupt Self, even undoing it for God, having no Will but his: The Remainders of Sin and Self in our Fleſh will be often riſing up, but this predominant Love diſpels them. So this Fear works with Delight.

And further, that we may know how ſerene and ſweet a thing it is, it is here likewiſe joined with Confidence, *Truſting*, a quickening Confidence always accompanying it; and ſo, undoubtedly, it is a bleſſed thing. *Bleſſed is he that feareth.* *Fear* ſounds rather quite contrary, hath an Air of Miſery; but add, *Whom?* He that *feareth the Lord*, that Touch turns it into Gold. He that ſo fears, fears not: *He ſhall not be afraid*; all petty Fears are ſwallowed up in this great Fear, as a Spirit inur'd with great Things is not ſtir'd nor affected at all with ſmall Matters. And this great Fear is as ſweet and pleaſing as theſe little Fears are anxious and vexing. Secure of other things, he can ſay, "If my God be pleaſed, no "matter who is diſpleaſed; no matter who deſpiſe "me, if he account me his; tho' all forſake me, "my deareſt Friends grow eſtranged, and look an- "other way, if he reject me not, that is my only "Fear; and for that I am not perplexed, I know "he will not." As they anſwered *Alexander* when he ſent to enquire what they moſt feared, thinking poſſibly they would have ſaid, *Leſt he ſhould invade them:*

them: Their Anſwer was, *We fear nothing but leſt Heaven ſhould fall upon us*; which they did not fear neither. A Believer hath no Fear but of the Diſpleaſure of Heaven, the Anger of God to fall upon him, he fears *that*; that is, accounts *that* only terrible; but yet he doth not fear, doth not apprehend it will fall on him, is better perſuaded of the Goodneſs of his God. So this *Fear* is ſtill joined with *Truſt*, as here, ſo often elſewhere, *Pſal.* xxxiii. 18. xl. 3. and cxlvii. 11.

There is no Turbulency in this Fear, 'tis calm and ſweet; even that moſt terrible Evil, that which this Fear properly apprehends and flies, *Sin*, yet the Fear of that goes not to a Diſtraction. Tho' there is little Strength, and many and great Enemies, mighty *Anakims* of Temptations from without, and Corruption within, and ſo good Reaſon for a holy humble Fear and Self-diſtruſt, yet this ſhould not beat us off; yea, is moſt fit to put us on to truſt in him who is our Strength. Courage! the Day ſhall be ours, tho' we may be often foiled and down, and ſometimes almoſt at a hopeleſs Point, yet *our Head* is on high, he hath conquered for us, and ſhall conquer in us; therefore, upon this Confidence, ſo fear as not to fear, *Why ſhould I fear in the Days of Evil, when the Iniquity of my Heels ſhall compaſs me about?* Pſal. xlix. 5. (which I take is ſome *grievous Affliction*, and that with a Viſage of Puniſhment of Sin; Guiltineſs to be read in it, yet not Fear.) " If I truſted in " Wealth, and boaſt myſelf in the Multitude of " Riches, then that being in hazard, I muſt fear; " leaning on that, it failing, I might fall. But this " is my Confidence, *Ver.* 15. *God will redeem my* " *Soul from the Power of the Grave*, for he ſhall re- " ceive me; Wealth cannot, but he can. It *buys* " not a Man out from his Hand, but he *buys* from " the Hand of the Grave." So the Word is; for the

the viſible Heavens even their Fall, and the Diſſolution of Nature, would not affright a Believer, *Pſal.* xli. 1. *Si fractus illabatur orbis*, &c.

Alas! moſt Perſons have dull or dim Apprehenſions and ſhallow Impreſſions of God, therefore they have little either of this *Fear* or this *Truſt*. God is not in all their Thoughts, but how to compaſs this or that Deſign; and if they miſs one, then to another, they are caſt from one Wave upon another: And if at any time they attain their Purpoſe, find it but Wind, a Handful of nothing, far from what they fancied it.

Oh! my Brethren, my Deſire is, that the Faces of your Souls were but once turn'd about, that they were towards him, looking to him, continually fearing him, *delighting*, *truſting* in him, making him your All. Can any thing ſo elevate and ennoble the Spirit of a Man, as to contemplate and converſe with the pure ever-bleſſed Spring and Father of Spirits? Beg that you may know him, that he would reveal himſelf to you; for otherwiſe no teaching can make him known, 'tis to light Candles to ſeek the Sun, to think to attain to this Knowledge without his own revealing it. If he hide his Face, who then may behold him? Pray for this quickening Knowledge, ſuch a Knowledge as will effectually work this happy *Fear* and *Truſt*.

You that have attained any thing of it, deſire and follow on to know the Lord, particularly, ſo as your Hearts may repoſe on him; ſo fear as you may not fear. He would have our Spirits calm and quiet, for when they are in a Hurry and Confuſion, they are then fit for nothing; all within makes a jarring unpleaſant Noiſe, as of an Inſtrument quite out of Tune.

This Fear of God is not, you ſee, a perplexing, doubting, and diſtruſt of his Love; on the contrary,

'tis a fixed reſting and truſt on his Love. Many that have ſome Truth of Grace are, through Weakneſs, filled with diſquieting Fears; ſo poſſibly, tho' they perceive it not, it may be in ſome a Point of Wilfulneſs, a little latent undiſcern'd Affectation of ſcrupling and doubting, placing much of Religion in it. True, where the Soul is really ſolicitous about its Intereſt in God, that argues ſome Grace, but being vexingly anxious about it, it argues that Grace is low and weak: A Sparkle there is even diſcovered by that Smoke; but the great Smoke ſtill continuing, and nothing ſeen but it, argues there is little Fire, little Faith, little Love.

And this, as it is unpleaſant to thyſelf, ſo to God, as Smoke to the Eyes. What if one ſhould be always queſtioning with his Friend, whether he loved him or no, and upon every little Occaſion were ready to think he doth not, how would this diſreliſh their Society together, tho' truly loving each other? The far more excellent way, and more pleaſing both to ourſelves and to God, were to reſolve on humble Truſt, Reverence and Confidence, moſt afraid to offend, delighting to walk in his Ways, loving him and his Will in all, and then reſting perſuaded of his Love, tho' he chaſtiſe us; and even, tho' we offend him, and ſee our Offences in our Chaſtiſements, yet he is good, plenteous in Redemption, ready to forgive. Therefore let *Iſrael* truſt and hope, let my Soul roll itſelf on him, and adventure there all its Weight; he bears greater Matters, upholding the Frame of Heaven and Earth, and is not troubled nor burden'd with it.

The Heart of a Man is not ſufficient for Self-ſupport, therefore naturally it ſeeks out ſome other thing to lean and reſt itſelf on. The Unhappineſs is, for the moſt part, that it ſeeks to Things below itſelf; theſe being both ſo mean and ſo uncertain, cannot

not be a firm and certain Stay to it. Theſe Things are not fixed themſelves, how can they then fix the Heart? Can a Man have firm Footing on a Quagmire, or moving Sands? Therefore Men are forced in theſe Things ſtill to ſhift their Seat, and ſeek about from one to anether, ſtill rolling and unſettled. The Believer only hath this Advantage, he hath a Reſt high enough and ſure enough, out of the Reach of all Hazards. *His Heart is fixed, truſting in the Lord.*

The Baſis of this Happineſs is, *He truſteth on the Lord.* So the *Heart is fixed*; and ſo fixed, it *fears no ill Tidings.*

This *Truſt* is grounded on the Word of God, revealing the Power and All-ſufficiency of God, and withal his Goodneſs, his Offer of himſelf to be the Stay of Souls, commanding us to reſt on him. People wait on I know not what Perſuaſions and *Aſſurances*, but I know no other to build Faith on, but the *Word of Promiſe*, the Truth and Faithfulneſs of God opened up, his Wiſdom, and Power, and Goodneſs, as the Stay of all theſe, that renouncing all other Props, will venture on it, and lay all upon him. He that believes, ſets to his Seal that God is true; and ſo he is ſealed for God, his Portion and Intereſt ſecured. *Iſa.* vii. 9. *If you will not believe, ſurely ye ſhall not be eſtabliſhed.*

This is the Way to have Peace and Aſſurance, which many look for firſt, *Thou will keep him in perfect Peace whoſe Mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee*, Iſa. xxvi. 3. So here, the Heart is fixed by *truſting.*

Seek then clearer Apprehenſions of the Faithfulneſs and Goodneſs of God, Hearts more enlarged in the Notion of free Grace, and the abſolute Truſt due to it; thus ſhall they be more eſtabliſh'd and fix'd in all the Rollings and Changes of the World.

Heart fixed.] Or *prepared*, ready, preſt, and in Arms for all Services; reſolved not to give back, able to meet all Adventures, and ſtand its Ground. God is unchangeable; and therefore Faith is invincible that ſets the Heart on him, faſtens it there on the Rock of Eternity: Then let Winds blow, and Storms ariſe, it cares not.

This firm and cloſe cleaving unto God, hath *in* it of the Affection, which is inſeparable from this Truſt, *Love* with *Faith*; and ſo a Hatred of all Ways and Thoughts that alienate and eſtrange from God, that remove and unſettle the Heart. The holieſt, varieſt Heart is ſurely the moſt believing and fixed Heart; if a Believer will adventure on any one Way of Sin, he ſhall find that will unfix him, and ſhake his Confidence, more than ten thouſand Hazards and Aſſaults from without. Theſe are ſo far from moving, that they ſettle and fix the Heart commonly more, cauſe it to cleave the cloſer and nearer unto God, but ſinful Liberty breeds Inquiet and diſturbs all. Where Sin is, there will be a Storm; the Wind within the Bowels of the Earth makes the Earthquake.

Would you be quiet, and have Peace within in troublous Times, keep near unto God, beware of any thing that may interpoſe betwixt you and your Confidence. *It is good for me* (ſays the *Pſalmiſt*) *to be near God*; not only to draw near, but to keep near, to cleave to him, and dwell in him, ſo the Word. Oh the ſweet Calm of ſuch a Soul amidſt all Storms; thus once truſting and fixed, then no more Fear, not afraid of *evil Tidings*, not of any *Ill-hearing*. Whatſoever Sound is terrible in the Ears of Men, the Noiſe of War, News of Death, even the Sound of the Trumpet in the laſt Judgment, he hears all this undiſquieted.

Nothing is unexpected, being once fixed on God; then

then the Heart may put Caſes to itſelf, and ſuppoſe all things imaginable, the moſt terrible, and look for them; not troubled before Trouble with dark and diſmal Apprehenſions, but ſatisfied in a quiet unmoved Expectation of the hardeſt things. Whatſoever it is, though particularly not thought on before, yet the Heart is not afraid of the News of it, becauſe *fixed truſting on the Lord*; nothing can ſhake that Foundation, nor diſſolve that Union, therefore no Fear. Yea, this Aſſurance ſtays the Heart in all things, how ſtrange and unforeſeen ſoever to it, "all "foreſeen to my God, on whom I truſt, yea, fore-"contrived and ordered by him." This is the impregnable Fort of a Soul, "all is at the Diſpoſe and "Command of my God, my Father rules all, what "need I fear?"

Every one truſts to ſomewhat; as for Honour, and Eſteem, and Popularity, they are airy vain things; but Riches ſeem a more ſolid Work and Fence, yet they are but a Tower in Conceit, not really, *Prov.* xviii. 11. *The rich Man's Wealth is his ſtrong City, and as an high Wall in his own Conceit*, but *the Name of the Lord is a ſtrong Tower indeed*, Ver. 10. This is the thing all ſeek, ſome *fence* and *fixing*. Here it is, we call you not to Vexation and Turmoil, but from it; and as St. *Paul* ſaid, *Acts* xvii. *Whom ye ignorantly worſhip, him declare I unto you.* Ye blindly, and fruitleſly ſeek after the *Shew*. The true aiming at this Fixedneſs of Mind will make that, tho' they fall ſhort, yet by the Way they will light on very pretty things that have ſome Virtue in them, as they that ſeek the Philoſopher's Stone: But the Believer hath the *thing*, the Secret itſelf of Tranquillity and Joy, and this turns all into Gold, their Iron Chains into a Crown of Gold, 2 *Cor.* iv. 17, 18.

This is the bleſt and ſafe Eſtate of Believers. Who can think they have a ſad heavy Life? Oh! it is the only

only lightſome, ſweet, chearful Condition in the World. The reſt of Men are poor, rolling, unſtayed things, every Report ſhaking them, as the Leaves of Trees are ſhaken with the Wind, *Iſa.* vii. yea, lighter than ſo, as the Chaff that the Wind drives to and fro at its Pleaſure, *Pſal.* i. Would Men but reflect and look in upon their own Hearts, it is a Wonder what vain childiſh things the moſt would find there. Glad and ſorry at things as light as the Toys of Children, at which they laugh and cry in a Breath. How eaſily puſt up with a Thing or Word that pleaſeth us! Bladder like, ſwelled with a little Air, and it ſhrinks in again in Diſcouragements and Fear upon the Touch of a Needle's Point, which gives that Air ſome Vent.

What is the Life of the greateſt Part but a continual Toſſing, betwixt vain Hopes and Fears, all their Days ſpent in theſe? Oh! how vain a thing is a Man even in his beſt Eſtate, while he is nothing but himſelf! his Heart not united and fixed on God, diſquieted in vain, how ſmall a thing will do it! He need no other but his own Heart, it may prove Diſquietment enough to itſelf, his Thoughts are his Tormentors.

I know ſome Men are, by a ſtronger Underſtanding and moral Principles, ſomewhat raiſed above the Vulgar, and ſpeak big of a Conſtancy of Mind; but theſe are but Flouriſhes, an acted Bravery. Somewhat there may be that will hold out in ſome Trials, but far ſhort of this Fixedneſs of Faith. Troubles may ſo multiply, as to drive them at length from their Poſture, and come on ſo thick, with ſuch violent Blows, as will ſmite them out of their artificial Guard, diſorder all their *Seneca* and *Epictetus*, and all their own calm Thoughts and high Reſolves. The Approach of Death, though they make a good Mien, and ſet the beſt Face on it; or if not, yet ſome kind

of

of Terror may ſeize on their Spirits, which they are not able to ſhift off. But the Soul truſting on God is prepared for all, not only for the Calamities of War, Peſtilence, Famine, Poverty, or Death, but in the ſaddeſt Apprehenſions of Soul, above Hope, believes under Hope, even in the darkeſt Night, caſts Anchor in God, repoſes on him when he ſees no Light, *Iſa.* l. 10. *Yea, though he ſlay me,* ſays *Job, yet will I truſt on him*; " not only though I dy, but " though he ſlay me; when I ſee his Hand lift up " to deſtroy me, yet from that ſame Hand will I " look for Salvation."

My Brethren, my Deſire is to ſtir in your Hearts an Ambition after this bleſt Eſtate of the Godly that fear the Lord, and truſt on him, and ſo fear no other thing. The common Revolutions and Changes of the World, and thoſe that in theſe late times we ourſelves have ſeen, and the Likelihood of more and greater coming on, ſeem dreadful to weak Minds. But let theſe perſwade us the more to prize and ſeek this fixed unaffrighted Station; no fixing but here where we make a Virtue of a Neceſſity.

Oh! that you would be perſwaded to break off from the vile Ways of Sin, that embaſe the Soul and fill it full of Terrors, and diſengage them from the Vanities of this World to take up in God, to live in him wholly, to cleave to, and depend on him, to eſteem nothing beſide him. Excellent was the Anſwer of that holy Man to the Emperor, firſt eſſaying him with large Proffers of Honour and Riches, to draw him from Chriſt. *Offer theſe things* (ſays he) *to Children, I regard them not.* Then after he tried to terrify him with threatning. *Threaten* (ſays he) *your effeminate Courtiers, I fear none of theſe things.*

Seek to have your Hearts eſtabliſhed on him by the Faith of *eternal Life*, and then it will be aſham'd to diſtruſt him in any other Thing. Yea, truly,

ly, you will not much regard, nor be careful for other Things how they be. 'Twill be all one, the better and worſe of this *Moment*; the Things of it, even the greateſt, being both in themſelves ſo little and worthleſs, and of ſo ſhort Continuance.

Well chuſe you; but all reckon'd and examin'd, I had rather be the pooreſt Believer than the greateſt King on Earth. How ſmall a Commotion, ſmall in its Beginning, may prove the overturning of the greateſt Kingdom. But the Believer is Heir to a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken. The mightieſt and moſt victorious Prince, that hath not only loſt nothing, but hath been gaining new Conqueſts all his Days, is ſtopt by a ſmall Diſtemper in the middle of his Courſe: He returns to his Duſt, then his vaſt Deſigns fall to nothing, *in that very Day his Thoughts periſh.* But the Believer, in that very Day, is ſent to the Poſſeſſion of his Crown, that is his Coronation-day; all his Thoughts are accompliſh'd.

How can you affright him? Bring him Word, his Eſtate is ruined; *yet my Inheritance is ſafe*, ſays he. Your Wife, or Child, or dear Friend, is dead; *yet my Father lives.* You yourſelf muſt die; well then, *I go home to my Father, and to my Inheritance.*

For the publick Troubles of the Church, doubtleſs it is both a moſt pious and generous Temper, to be more deeply affected for theſe than for all our private ones; and to reſent common Calamities of any People, but eſpecially of God's own People, hath been the Character of Men near unto him. Obſerve the pathetical Strains of the Prophets bewailing, when they foretel the Deſolation even of foreign Kingdoms, much more for the Lord's choſen People, ſtill mindful of *Sion*, and mournful for her Diſtreſſes, *Jer.* ix. 1. and the whole Book of *Lamentations.* Pſal. cxxxvii. *If I forget thee, O Jeruſalem.* Pious Spirits are always publick, as even brave Heathens for

ſor the Commonwealth: So he, in that of *Horace* *. *Little regarding himſelf, but much ſolicitous for the Publick.* Yet even in this, with much Compaſſion, there is a Calm in a Believer's Mind, (how theſe agree, none can tell, but they that feel it) he finds amidſt all hard News, yet ſtill a *fixed Heart truſting*, ſatisfied in this, that Deliverance ſhall come in due time, *Pſal.* cii. 13. and that in thoſe Judgments that are inflicted, Man ſhall be humbled and God exalted, *Iſa.* ii. 11. and v. 15, 16. and that in all Tumults and Changes, and Subverſion of States, ſtill *his Throne is fixed*, and with that the Believer's Heart likewiſe, *Pſal.* xciii. So *Pſal.* xxix. 10. *The Lord ſitteth upon the Flood: Yea, the Lord ſitteth King for ever.* Or, *ſat in the Flood*, poſſibly referring to the general *Deluge*, yet that then God ſat quiet, and ſtill *ſitteth King for ever.* He ſteer'd the Ark, and ſtill guides his Church through all. So *Pſal.* xlvi. throughout that whole *Pſalm.* In all Commotions, the Kingdom of Chriſt ſhall be ſpreading and growing, and the Cloſe of all ſhall be full Victory on his Side, and that's ſufficient.

Of this, a ſingular Example is in *Job*, who was not daunted with ſo many Ill-hearings, but ſtood as an unmov'd Rock amidſt the Winds and Waves †.

In this Condition there is ſo much Sweetneſs, that if known, a Man might ſuſpect himſelf rather ſelfiſhly taken with it, than purely loving God. Such Joy in believing, or at leaſt, ſuch Peace, ſuch a ſerene Calmneſs, is in no other thing in this World. Nothing without or within a Man to be named to this of truſting on his *Goodneſs*, he is God, and on his *Faithfulneſs*, giving his Promiſe for thy Warrant. He

* *Invenit inſomni volventem publica curâ*
Fata virûm, caſuſque urbis, cunctiſque timentem;
Securumque ſui.

† *Ille velut rupes immota manebat.*

commands thee to roll thyſelf on him. The holy Soul ſtill truſts in the darkeſt Apprehenſions. If it is ſuggeſted *thou art a Reprobate*, yet will the Soul ſay, "I will ſee the utmoſt, and hang by the Hold I "have, till I feel myſelf really caſt off, and will "not willingly fall off. If I muſt be ſeparated from "him, he ſhall do it himſelf, he ſhall ſhake me off "while I would cleave to him. Yea, to the ut-"moſt I will look for Mercy, and will hope better; "tho' I found him ſhaking me off, yet will I think "he will not do it." It is good to ſeek after all poſſible Aſſurance, but not to fret at the Want of it; for even without theſe Aſſurances, which ſome Chriſtians hang too much upon, there is in ſimple Truſt and Reliance on God, and in a Deſire to walk in his Ways, ſuch a Fort of Peace, as all the Aſſaults in the World are not able to make a Breach in. And to this add that unſpeakable Delight in walking in his Fear, joined with this Truſt. The noble Ambition of pleaſing him, makes one careleſs of pleaſing or diſpleaſing all the World. Beſides, the Delight in his Commandments, ſo pure, ſo juſt a Law, Holineſs, Victory over Luſts, and Temperance, hath a Sweetneſs in it that preſently pays itſelf, becauſe his Will.

'Tis the godly Man alone, who by this fixed Conſideration in God, looks the grim Viſage of Death in the Face with an unappal'd Mind. It damps all the Joys, and defeats all the Hopes of the moſt proſperous, proudeſt and wiſeſt Worldlings. As he ſaid, when ſhot, *Avocâſti ab optima demonſtratione.* It ſpoils all their Figures and fine Devices. But *to the Righteous, there is Hope in his Death:* He goes through it without Fear, without *Caligula*'s *Quò vadis.* Tho' Riches, Honours, and all the Glories of this World, are with a Man, yet he fears, yea, he fears the more for theſe,

Archimedes.

theſe, becauſe here they muſt end. But the good Man looks Death out of Countenance, in the Words of *David*, *Tho' I walk through the Valley and Shadow of Death, yet will I fear no Evil, for thou art with me.*

SERMON XIII.

MATTH. XIII. 3.

And he ſpake many Things unto them in Parables, ſaying, Behold a Sower went forth to ſow, &c.

THE rich Bounty of God hath furniſh'd our natural Life, not barely for ſtrict Neceſſity, but with great Abundance, many Kinds of Beaſts, and Fowls, and Fiſhes, and Herbs, and Fruits, has he provided for the Uſe of Man. Thus our ſpiritual Life likewiſe is ſupported with a Variety; the Word, the Food of it, hath not only all neceſſary Truths once ſimply ſet down, but a great Variety of Doctrine, for our more abundant Inſtruction and Conſolation. Amongſt the reſt, this way of Similitudes hath a notable Commixture of Profit and Delight.

Parables, not unfolded and underſtood, are a Veil (as here) to the Multitude, and in that are a great Judgment, as *Iſa.* vi. 9. cited here; but when cleared and made tranſparent, then they are a Glaſs to behold Divine Things in, more commodiouſly and ſuitably to our way. All Things are big with ſuch Reſemblances, but they require the dextrous Hand of an active Spirit to bring them forth. This way,

beſides other Advantages, is much grac'd and commended by our Saviour's frequent Uſe of it.

That here is fitted to the Occaſion; Multitudes coming to hear him, and many not a whit the better: He inſtructs us in this Point, the great Difference between the different Hearts of Men; ſo that the ſame Word hath very different Succeſs in them.

In this Parable we ſhall conſider theſe three Things: (1.) *The Nature of the Word in itſelf.* (2.) *The Sameneſs and Commonneſs of the Diſpenſation.* (3.) *The Difference of the Operation and Production.*

The Word *Seed* hath in it a productive Virtue to bring forth Fruit according to its Kind, that is, the Fruit of a *new Life*; not only a new Habitude and Faſhion of Life without, but a *new Nature*, a new Kind of Life within, new Thoughts, a new Eſtimate of Things, new Delights and Actions. When the Word reveals God, his Greatneſs and Holineſs, then it begets pious Fear and Reverence, and Study of Conformity to him: When it reveals his Goodneſs and Mercy, it works Love and Confidence: When it holds up in our View Chriſt crucified, it crucifies the Soul to the World, and the World to it: When it repreſents theſe rich Things laid up for us, that bleſt Inheritance of the Saints, then it makes all the Luſtre of this World vaniſh, ſhews how poor it is, weans and calls off the Heart from them, raiſing it to theſe higher Hopes, and ſets it on the Project of a Crown; and ſo is a Seed of noble Thoughts, and of a ſuitable Behaviour in a Chriſtian, as in the Expoſition of this Parable, 'tis called the *Word of the Kingdom.*

Seed, an *immortal Seed*, as St. *Peter* calls it, ſpringing up to no leſs than an eternal Life.

This teaches us, 1. Highly to eſteem the great Goodneſs of God to theſe Places and Times, that were moſt bleſt with it. *Pſal.* cxlvii. 19, 20. *He ſheweth*

ſheweth his Word unto Jacob, *his Statutes and his Judgment unto* Iſrael; *he hath not dealt ſo with any Nation, and as for his Judgments they have not known them.*

2. That the ſame Diſpenſation is to be preach'd indifferently to all where it comes, as far as the Sound can reach. And thus it was very much extended in the firſt promulgating of the Goſpel; *their Sound went out through all the Earth*, as the Apoſtle alluſively applies that of the *Pſalmiſt*.

3. This teaches alſo Miniſters liberally to ſow this Seed at all Times, according to that, *Eccl.* xi. 6. *In the Morning ſow thy Seed, and in the Evening withhold not thine Hand*, &c. praying earneſtly to him, that is the Lord not only of the Harveſt, but of the Seed-time, and of this *Seed* to make it fruitful; this is his peculiar Work. So the Apoſtle acknowledges, 1 *Cor.* iii. 6. *I have planted*, Apollos *watered, but God gave the Increaſe.*

4. Hence we alſo learn the Succeſs to be very different. This is moſt evident in Men: One caſt into the Mould and Faſhion of the Word, and ſo moulded and faſhioned by it; another no whit changed; one Heart melting before it, another ſtill hardened under it.

So then, this is not all, to have the Word and hear it, as if that would ſerve turn and ſave us, as we commonly fancy, *The Temple of the Lord, The Temple of the Lord.* Multitudes under the continual Sound of the Word, yet remain lifeleſs and fruitleſs, and die in their Sins; therefore we muſt enquire and examine ſtrictly, what becomes of it, how it works, what it brings forth; and for this very End this Parable declares ſo many are fruitleſs. We need not preſs them, they are three to one here; yea, that were too narrow, the Odds is far greater, for theſe are but the Kinds of unfruitful Grounds, and

under

under each of theſe huge Multitudes of Individuals, ſo that there may be a hundred to one, and it is to be feared, in many Congregations, it is more than ſo.

Whence is then the Difference? Not from the Seed, that is the ſame to all; not from the Sower neither, for though theſe be divers, and of different Abilities, yet it hangs little or nothing on that. Indeed, he is the fitteſt to preach that is himſelf moſt like his Meſſage, and comes forth not only with a Handful of this Seed in his Hand, but with Store of it in his Heart, the Word *dwelling richly in him*; yet howſoever, the Seed he ſows, being this Word of Life, depends not on his Qualifications in any Kind, either of common Gifts, or ſpecial Grace. People miſtake this much, and it is a carnal Conceit to hang on the Advantages of the Miniſter, or to eye that much. The ſure way is to look up to God, and to look into thine own Heart. An unchanged unſoftned Heart, as an evil Soil, diſappoints the Fruit. What though ſown by a weak Hand, yea, poſſibly a foul one, yet if received in a clean and honeſt Heart, it will fructify much. There is in the World a needleſs and prejudicial Differencing of Men, out of which People will not come for all we can ſay.

The firſt bad Ground is a *High-way*. Now we have a Commentary here, whence we may not, nor will not depart, it is authentick and full, *Ver.* 19. *they that underſtand not*. Groſs brutiſh Spirits, that perceive not what is ſaid, are as if they were not there, ſit like Blocks, one Log of Wood upon another, as he ſaid.* This is our brutiſh Multitude, what pity is it to ſee ſo many, ſuch as have not ſo much as a natural Apprehenſion of ſpiritual Truths? The *common Road* of all Paſſengers, of all Kind of fooliſh, brutiſh Thoughts, ſeeking nothing but how to

* *Lapis ſuper lapidem in theatro.*

to live, and yet know not to what End, have no Deſign, trivial, *High-way* Hearts, all Temptations paſs at their Pleaſure, *profane* as *Eſau*, which ſome Criticks draw from a Word ſignifying the *Threſhold*, the outer Step that every foul Foot treads on.

Theſe retain nothing, there is no Hazard of that, and yet the Enemy of Souls, to make all ſure, leſt peradventure ſome Word might take Root unawares, ſome Grain of this Seed, he is buſy to pick it away; to take them off from all Reflexion, all ſerious Thoughts, or the Remembrance of any thing ſpoken to them. And if any common Word is remembred, yet it doth no Good, for that is troden down as the reſt, though the moſt *is picked up*, becauſe it lies on the Road. So expreſt by St. *Mark* iv. 4.

The ſecond is *ſtony Ground*. Hard Hearts, not ſoftned and made penetrable, to receive in deeply this ingrafted Word with Meekneſs, with humble Yieldance and Submiſſion to it, the *Rocks*. Yet in theſe there is often ſome receiving of it, and a little ſlender Moiſture above them, which the warm Air may make ſpring up a little; they *receive with Joy*, have a little preſent Delight in it, are moved and taken with the Sermon, poſſibly to the ſhedding of ſome Tears, but the Miſery is, there is a Want of Depth of Earth, it ſinks not.

No Wonder if there is ſome preſent Delight in theſe, therefore the *Word of the Kingdom*, eſpecially if skilfully and ſenſibly delivered by ſome more able Speaker, pleaſes. Let it be but a Fancy, yet it is a fine pleaſant one: Such Love as the Son of God to dy for Sinners; ſuch a rich Purchaſe made as a Kingdom; ſuch Glory and Sweetneſs. Therefore the Deſcription of the new *Jeruſalem*, *Apoc.* xxi. ſuppoſe it be but a Dream, or one of the Viſions of the Night, yet it is paſſing fine; it muſt needs pleaſe a Mind that heeds what is ſaid of it. There is a *natural*

tural Delight in ſpiritual Things, and thus the Word of the Prophet, as the Lord tells him, was as a Minſtrel's Voice, a fine Song ſo long as it laſts, but dies out in the Air; it may be, the Reliſh and Air of it will remain a while in the Imagination, but not long, even that wears out, and is forgot. So here it is *heard with Joy*, and ſome is *ſpringing up* preſently: They commend it, and it may be, repeat ſome Paſſages, yea, poſſibly deſire to be like it, to have ſuch and ſuch Graces as are recommended, and upon that think they have them, are preſently good Chriſtians in their own Conceit, and to Appearance ſome Change is wrought, and it appears to be all that it is. But it is not deep enough, they talk poſſibly too much, more than thoſe whoſe Hearts receive it more deeply; there it lies hid longer, and little is heard of it. Others may think it is loſt, and poſſibly themſelves do not perceive that it is there, they are exerciſed and humbled at it, and find no Good in their own Hearts; yet there it is hid, as *David* ſays, *Thy Word have I hid in my Heart.* And as Seed in a Manner dies in a ſilent ſmothering Way, yet it is in order to the fructifying, and to the reviving of it, it will ſpring up in time, and be *fruitful* in its Seaſon, *with Patience*, as St. *Luke* hath it of the good Ground; not ſo ſuddenly, but much more ſurely and ſolidly.

But the moſt are preſent, Muſhrom Chriſtians, ſoon ripe, ſoon rotten; the Seed goes never deep, it ſprings up indeed, but any thing blaſts and withers it. Little Root in ſome, if Trials ariſe, either the Heat of *Perſecution* without, or a *Temptation* within; this ſudden Spring-ſeed can ſtand before neither.

Oh rocky Hearts! How ſhallow, ſhallow, are the Impreſſions of divine Things upon you? Religion goes never farther than the upper Surface of your Hearts, few deep Thoughts of God, and of Jeſus Chriſt,

Chriſt, and the Things of the World to come; all are but ſlight and tranſient Glances.

The third is *thorny Ground.* This relates to the Cares and Pleaſures, and all the Intereſts of this Life. See St. *Mark* iv. 1. and St. *Luke* viii. 5. All theſe together are the *Thorns*, and theſe grow in Hearts that do more deeply receive the Seed, and ſend it forth, and ſpring up more hopefully than either of the other two, and yet choak it. Oh! the Pity.

Many are thus almoſt at Heaven, ſo much Deſire of Renovation, and ſome Endeavours after it, and yet the Thorns prevail. Miſerable Thorns! The baſe things of a periſhing Life drawing away the Strength of Affections, ſucking the Sap of the Soul. Our other Seed and Harveſt, our Corn and Hay, our Shops and Ships, our Tradings and Bargains, our Suits and Pretenſions for Places and Employments of Gain or Credit, Husband, and Wife, and Children, and Houſe, and Train, our Feaſtings and Entertainments, and other Pleaſures of Senſe, our Civilities and Compliments; and a World of thoſe in all the World are theſe *Thorns*, and they overſpread all. *The Luſt of the Eye, the Luſt of the Fleſh and the Pride of Life.*

And for how long is all the Advantage and Delight of theſe? Alas! that ſo poor things ſhould prejudice us of the rich and bleſſed Increaſe of this divine Seed.

The laſt is *good Ground*, *A good and honeſt Heart*; not much Fineneſs here, not many Queſtions and Diſputes, but honeſt Simplicity, ſweet Sincerity, that is all, a humble ſingle Deſire to eye, and to do the Will of God, and this from Love to himſelf. This makes the Soul abound in the *Fruits* of Holineſs, receiving the Word as the Ground of it; different Degrees there are indeed, ſome *thirty*, ſome *ſixty*, and ſome *an hundred Fold*, yet the loweſt aiming at the

higheſt, not reſting ſatisfied; yet growing more fruitful, if thirty laſt Year, deſiring to bring forth ſixty this.

This is the great Point, we ought to examine it, for much is ſown and little brought forth. Our God hath done much for us, (what more could be done?) yet when Grapes were expected, wild Grapes are produced. What becomes of all? Who grow to be more ſpiritual, more humble and meek, more like Chriſt, more ſelf-denying, fuller of Love to God, and one to another? Some, but alas! few. All the Land is *ſown*, and that plentifully, with the good Seed: But what *comes* for the moſt Part? Cockle and no Grain. *Infelix lolium.*

We would do all other things to Purpoſe, and not willingly loſe our End; not trade and gain nothing; buy and ſell, and live by the Loſs; not plow and ſow, and reap nothing; how ſenſibly do we feel one ill Year? And ſhall *this* alone be loſt Labour, that, well improved, were worth all the reſt? Oh! how much more worth than all? Shall we only do the greateſt Buſineſs to the leaſt Purpoſe? Bethink yourſelves, what do we here? why come we here? if we ſtill remain as proud and paſſionate, and as ſelf-willed as before, what will all great Bargains, and good Years, and full Barns, avail within a while? That Word, *Thou Fool, this Night ſhall they fetch away thy Soul*, how terrible will it be?

We think we are wiſe in not loſing our Labour in other things? why, it is all loſt, even where moſt gained. What amounts it to, caſt up? *Vanity and Vexation of Spirit* is the total Sum. And in all our Projecting and Buſling, what do we but *ſow the Wind*, and *reap the Whirl-wind?* ſow *Vanity*, and reap *Vexation.*

This Seed alone being fruitful, makes rich and happy, ſprings up to *eternal Life*. Oh that we were wiſe,

wiſe, and that we would at length learn to hear every Sermon as on the utmoſt Edge of Time, at the very brink of Eternity. For any thing we know for ourſelves, of any of us it may be really ſo; however, it is wiſe and ſafe to do as if it were ſo. Will you be perſwaded of this? It were a happy Sermon if it could prevail, for the more fruitful hearing of all the reſt henceforward. We have loſt too much of our little Time; and thus, with the Apoſtle, *I beſeech you, I beſeech you, receive not the Grace of God in vain.*

Now that you may be fruitful, examine well your own Hearts, pluck up, weed out, for there are ſtill Thorns. Some will grow, but he is the happieſt Man that hath the ſharpeſt Eye, and the buſieſt Hand, ſpying them out, and plucking them up. *Take heed how you hear*, think it not ſo eaſy a Matter. *Plow up, and ſow not among Thorns*, Jer. iv.

And above all pray, pray before, after, and in hearing. Dart up Deſires to God, he is the Lord of the Harveſt, whoſe Influence doth all. The Difference of the Soil makes indeed the Difference of Succeſs, but the Lord hath the Privilege of bettering the Soil. He that framed the Heart, changes it when and how he will. There is a Curſe on all Grounds naturally, that fell on the Earth for Man's Sake, but fell more on the Ground of Man's own Heart within him: *Thorns and Briars ſhalt thou bring forth.* Now it is he that denounced that Curſe, that alone hath Power to remove it; he is both the Sovereign Owner of the Seed, and Changer of the Soil, turns a Wilderneſs into *Carmel* by his Spirit; and no Ground, no Heart, can be good till he change it.

And being changed, much Care muſt be had ſtill of manuring, for ſtill that is in it, that will bring forth many Weeds, is a Mother to them, and but a Step-mother to this Seed. Therefore,

Conſider it, if you think this concerns you; *he that hath an Ear to hear*, as our Saviour cloſes, *let him hear.* The Lord apply your Hearts to this Work; and though Diſcouragements ariſe without, or within, and little preſent Fruit appear, but Corruption is rather ſtronger and greater, yet watch and pray; wait on, it ſhall be better, this Fruit is to be brought forth *with Patience*, as St. *Luke* hath it. And this *Seed*, this *Word*, the Lord calls by that very Name, the very *Word of his Patience.* Keep it, hide it in thy Heart, and in due time it ſhall ſpring up. And this Patience ſhall be put to it but for a little while, the Day of Harveſt is at Hand, when all in any Meaſure fruitful in Grace ſhall be gathered into Glory.

SERMON XIV.

2 Cor. VII. 1.

Having therefore theſe Promiſes (dearly beloved) let us cleanſe ourſelves from all Filthineſs of the Fleſh and Spirit, perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God.

IT is a thing both of unſpeakable Sweetneſs and Uſefulneſs for a Chriſtian, often to conſider the Excellency of that Eſtate to which he is called. It cannot fail to put him upon very high Reſolutions, and carry him on in the divine Ambition of behaving daily more ſuitably to his high Calling and Hopes. Therefore, theſe are often ſet before Chriſtians in the Scripture, and are preſt here by the Apoſtle upon a particular Occaſion of the Avoidance of near Combinements with Unbelievers. He mentions

tions ſome choice *Promiſes* that God makes to his own People, and of their *near Relation* to, and *Communion* with himſelf. And upon theſe he enlarges and raiſes the Exhortation to the univerſal Endeavour of all Holineſs, and that as aiming at the very Top and high Degree of it.

In the Words are, 1. The Thing to which he would perſwade. 2. The Motive. The Thing, Holineſs in its full Extenſion and Intenſion, *Purging ourſelves from all Filthineſs of the Fleſh and Spirit*, and *perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God.*

The purging out of Filthineſs, and perfecting of Holineſs, expreſs thoſe two Parts of renewing Grace, *Mortification* and *Vivification*, as uſually they are diſtinguiſh'd. But I conceive they are not ſo truly different Parts, as a different Notion of the ſame thing, the Decreaſe of Sin, and Increaſe of Grace being truly one thing, as the diſpelling of Darkneſs, and augmenting of Light. So here the one is rendred, as the neceſſary Reſult, yea, as the equivalent of the other; the ſame thing indeed, *Purging from Filthineſs*, and in ſo doing *perfecting Holineſs*; *perfecting Holineſs*, and in ſo doing *purging from Filthineſs*. That *Perfection*, by which is meant a growing progreſſive Advance towards Perfection.

The Words without ſtraining give us as it were the ſeveral Dimenſions of Holineſs, The *Breadth*, purging all Filthineſs; the *Length*, parallel to Man's Compoſure, running all along through his Soul and Body, — purging Filthineſs of the Fleſh and Spirit; the *Height*, perfecting Holineſs; the *Depth*, that which is the Bottom whence it riſes up, — a deep Impreſs of the Fear of God. *Perfecting Holineſs in the Fear of God.*

Cleanſe ourſelves.] It is the Lord that is the Sanctifier of his People, he *purges away their Droſs and Tin*, he *pours clean Water*, according to his Promiſes,

yet

yet doth he call to us to cleanſe ourſelves, even having ſuch Promiſes, *Let us cleanſe ourſelves.* He puts a new Life into us, and cauſes us to act, and excites us to excite it, and call it up to act in the Progreſs of Sanctification. Men are ſtrangely inclined to a perverſe Conſtruction of Things, tell them that we are to act and work, and give Diligence, then they would fancy a doing in their own Strength, and be their own Saviours. Again, tell them that God works all our Works in us, and for us, then they would take the Eaſe of doing nothing; if they cannot have the Praiſe of doing all, they will ſit ſtill with folded Hands, and uſe no Diligence at all. But this is the corrupt Logick of the Fleſh, *its* baſe Sophiſtry. The Apoſtle reaſons juſt contrary, *Phil.* ii. 12. *It is God that worketh in us, both to will and do. Therefore*, would a carnal Heart ſay, *we need not work*, or at leaſt, may work very careleſly. But he infers, *Therefore let us work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling*, i. e. in the more humble Obedience to God, and Dependence on him, not obſtructing the Influences of his Grace, and by Sloth, and Negligence provoking him to withdraw or abate it. Certainly many in whom there is *Truth* of Grace, are kept low in the *Growth* of it, by their own Slothfulneſs, ſitting ſtill, and not beſtirring themſelves, and exerciſing the proper Actions of that ſpiritual Life, by which it is entertained and advanced.

From all Filthineſs.] All kind of ſinful Pollutions. Not as Men commonly do reform *ſome* things, and take to themſelves Diſpenſations in *others*, at leaſt in ſome *one* peculiar Sin, their *Miſtreſs* and their *Herodias*, their *Dalilah:* No parting with that; yea, they rather forego many other things, as a Kind of Compoſition for the retaining of that.

Of Fleſh and Spirit.] The *whole* Man muſt be purified and conſecrated to God, not only refined from the

the groſs outward Acts of Sin, but from the inward Affection to it, and Motions of it, that ſo the Heart go not after it, (*Pſal.* cxxxi.) which under Reſtraints of outward committing Sin, it may do, and very often does. As the *Iſraelites luſted after the Fleſh Pots*, their Hearts remained in *Egypt* ſtill, though their Bodies were brought out. This is then to be done, *viz.* Affection to Sin to be purged out. That is, to cleanſe the *Ground*, not only to lop off the Branches, but to dig about, and looſen and pluck up the Root. Though ſtill Fibres of it will ſtick, yet we ought ſtill to be finding them out, and plucking them up.

Further, Theſe not only of the inner Part of all Sins, but of ſome Sins that are moſt or wholly inward, that hang not ſo much on the Body, nor are acted by it, thoſe *Filthineſſes of the Spirit* that are leſs diſcerned than thoſe of the Fleſh; and as more hardly diſcerned, ſo when diſcerned, more hardly purged out, *Pride*, *Self-love*, *Unbelief*, *Curioſity*, &c. which though more retired and refined Sins, yet are Pollutions and Defilements, yea of the worſt Sort, as being more ſpiritual, are *Filthineſſes of the Spirit*. Fleſhly Pollutions are things of which the Devils are not capable in themſelves, though they excite Men to them, and ſo they are called unclean Spirits. But the higheſt Rank of Sins, are thoſe that are properly *ſpiritual Wickedneſſes*. Theſe in Men are the chief Strengths of *Satan*, the inner Works of theſe Forts and *Strongholds*, 2 *Cor.* x. 4. Many that are not much tempted to the common groſs Senſualities, have poſſibly (though an Inclination to them, yet) a Kind of Diſdain; and, through Education and Morality, and Strength of Reaſon, with ſomewhat of natural Conſcience, are carried above them; who yet have many of theſe *Heights*, thoſe lofty *Imaginations* that riſe againſt God, and the Obedience of Chriſt, all which muſt be demoliſhed.

Per-

Perfecting Holineſs.] Not content with low Meaſures, ſo much as keeps from Hell, but aſpiring towards Perfection; aiming high at Self-victory, Self-denial, and the Love of God, purer and hotter, as a Fire growing and flaming up, and conſuming the Earth. Though Men fall ſhort of their Aim, yet it is good to aim high, they ſhall ſhoot ſo much the higher, though not full ſo high as they aim. Thus we ought to be ſetting the State of Perfection in our Eye, reſolving not to reſt content below that, and to come as near it as we can, even before we come at it, *Phil.* iii. 11, 12. This is to act as one that hath ſuch a Hope, ſuch a State in view, and is ſtill advancing towards it.

In the Fear of God.] No working but on firm Ground, no ſolid Endeavours in Holineſs where it is not founded in a deep Heart, a Reverence of God, a Deſire to pleaſe him and to be like him, which ſprings from Love.

This moſt Men are either Strangers to wholly, or are but ſlight and ſhallow in it, and therefore make ſo little true Progreſs in Holineſs.

Then there is the Motive, *Having theſe Promiſes*; being called to ſo fair an Eſtate, ſo excellent a Condition, to be the People, yea, the Sons and Daughters of God. Therefore they are called to the *coming forth* from *Babel*, and the ſeparating themſelves from Sin, and purging it out. Holineſs is his Image in his Children, the more of it, the more ſuitable to that bleſſed Relation and Dignity, and the firmer are the Hopes of the Inheritance of Glory.

Conſider Sin as a Filthineſs, hate it. Oh how ugly and vile is Luſt, how deformed is ſwelling Pride, and all Sin is an Averſion from God, a caſting the noble Soul into the Mire, the defacing all its Beauty. Turning to preſent Things, it pollutes itſelf with them, that he who was *clad in Scarlet, embraces*

braces the Dunghill, as *Jeremy* in another Senſe laments.

Purity of Things is an *Unmixture* and *Simplicity* correſponding with their own Being; and ſo is the Soul when elevated above the Earth, and Senſe, and united unto God, contemplating him, and delighting in him, all inordinate Bent to the Creatures, or to itſelf, (which is the firſt and main Diſorder) doth defile and debaſe it. And the more it is ſublim'd and freed from itſelf, the purer and more heavenly it grows, and partakes the more of God, and reſembles him the more.

This then to be our main Study, firſt to ſearch out our Iniquities, the particular Defilements of our Nature, not only groſs Filthineſſes, Drunkenneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, *&c.* but our Love of this Earth, or of *Air* or Vanity of Mind, our Self-will and Self-ſeeking. Moſt, even of Chriſtians, are ſhort-ſighted in their own ſecret Evils, the *Filthineſſes of Spirit* eſpecially, and uſe little Diligence in this Enquiry. They do not ſeek Light from God, to go in before him, and to lead them into themſelves, as the Prophet had in the Diſcovery of Idolatries at *Jeruſalem*. Oh! that we could once ſee what Heaps of Abominations lie hid in us, one behind another.

Then having ſearch'd out, we muſt follow on to purge out; not to paſs over, nor ſpare any, but to delight moſt in caſting out the beſt beloved Sin, the choiceſt Idol, that hath had moſt of our Service and Sacrifices, to make room for Jeſus Chriſt.

And never ceaſe in this Work, for ſtill there is need of more purging, one Day's Work in this diſpoſes for and engages to a further, to the next; for as Sin is purged out, Light comes in, and more clear Diſcoveries are made of remaining Pollutions. So then ſtill there muſt be Progreſs, leſs of the World, and more of God in the Heart every Day. Oh! this

is a ſweet Courſe of Life, what Gain, what Preferment, to be compared to it?

And in this 'tis good to have our Ambition growing; the higher we riſe, to aſpire ſtill the higher, looking farther than before, even toward the Perfection of Holineſs. It is not much we can here attain to, but ſure, 'tis commonly far leſs than we might; we improve not our Condition and Advantages as we might do. The World is buſy driving forwards their Deſigns. Men of Spirit are animated, both by better and worſe Succeſs: If any thing miſcarry, it ſets them on the more eagerly to make it up, in the right Management of ſome other Deſign; and when they proſper in one thing, that enables and encourages them to attempt further. Shall all things ſeem worth our Pains? Are only Grace and Glory ſo cheap in our Account, that the leaſt Diligence of all goes that Way? Oh, ſtrange Deluſion!

Now our cleanſing is to be managed by all holy Means: *Word* and *Sacrament* more wiſely and ſpiritually uſed than commonly with us; and *private Prayer*, that purifies and elevates the Soul, takes it up into the Mount, and makes it ſhine; and particularly ſupplicating for the Spirit of Holineſs, and Victory over Sin, is not in vain, it obtains its Deſires of God, the Soul becoming that which it is fixedly ſet upon: *Holy Reſolution*, Chriſtians much wanting in this, faint and looſe in their Purpoſes; the *Conſideration of Divine Truths*, the Myſteries of the Kingdom, the Hope of Chriſtians, yea, rich and great Promiſes, that is particularly here the Motive. Theſe are all the Means, holy Means they are, as their End is the Perfection of Holineſs.

Having theſe Promiſes.] Now conſider whether it is better to be the Slaves of Satan, or the Sons of God; meaſure Delight in God with the low baſe Pleaſures of Senſe. *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they*

they ſhall ſee God; theſe gradually go on together, and are perfected together.

Why then is there ſuch an invincible Love of Sin in the Hearts of Men? At leaſt, why ſo little Love of Holineſs, and Endeavour after it, ſo mean Thoughts of it, as a Thing either indecent or unpleaſant, when 'tis the only noble and the only delightful Thing in the World? The Soul by other Things is drawn below itſelf, but by Holineſs it is raiſed above itſelf, and made divine. Pleaſures of Sin for a Seaſon, the Pleaſure of a Moment exchanged for thoſe of Eternity. But even in the mean time, in this Seaſon, the Soul is fed with Communion with God, one Hour of which is more worth than the longeſt Life of the higheſt of the World's Delights.

SERMON XV.

PSAL. CXIX. 32.

I will run the Way of thy Commandments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my Heart.

TO deſire Eaſe and Happineſs, under a general Repreſentation of it, is a Thing of more eaſy and general Perſuaſion. There is ſomewhat in Nature to help the Argument, but to find Beauty in, and be taken with the very *Way* of Holineſs that leads to it, is more rare, and depends on a higher Principle. *Self-love* inclines a Man to deſire the *Reſt of Love*, but to love and deſire *the Labour of Love*, is Love of a higher and purer Strain. To delight, and be chearful in Obedience, argues much Love as the Spring of it. That is the Thing the ho-

ly Pſalmiſt doth ſo plentifully expreſs in this Pſalm, and he is ſtill deſiring more of that ſweet and lively Affection that might make him yet more abundant in Action. Thus here, *I will run*, &c. He preſents his Deſire and Purpoſe together, " The more of this " Grace thou beſtoweſt on me, the more Service " ſhall I be able to do thee."

This is the Top of his Ambition, while others are ſeeking to enlarge their Barns, their Lands, or Eſtates, or Titles, Kings to enlarge their Territories or Authority, to incroach on neighbouring Kingdoms, or be more abſolute in their own; inſtead of all ſuch *Enlargements*, this is *David's* great Deſire, *An enlarged Heart to run the Way of God's Commandments.*

And theſe *other* (how big ſoever they ſound) are poor narrow Deſires; this *one* is larger and higher than them all, and gives Evidence of a Heart already large: But as it is miſerable in *thoſe*, 'tis happy in *this*, *Much would ſtill have more.*

Let others ſeek more *Money*, or more *Honour*. Oh! the bleſſed Choice of that Soul that is ſtill ſeeking more *Love to God*, more Affection, and more Ability to do him Service; that counts all Days and Hours for loſt that are not employed to this Improvement; that hears the Word in publick, and reads it in private for this Purpoſe, to kindle this Love, or to blow the Sparkle, if any there be already in the Heart, to raiſe it to a clear Flame, and from a little Flame to make it burn yet hotter and purer, and riſe higher. But, above all Means, is often preſenting *this* in Prayer to him, on whoſe Influence all depends, in whoſe Hand our Hearts are, much more than in our own. It follows him with this Deſire, and works on him by his own Intereſt. Though there can be really no Acceſſion of Gain to him by our Services, yet he is pleaſed ſo to account with us as if there were.

There-

Therefore we may urge this: "Lord give more, and "receive more; *I will run the Way of thy Command-* "*ments, when thou ſhalt enlarge my Heart.*"

We have here in the Words a required *Diſpoſition*, and a ſuitable *Reſolution*. The *Diſpoſition* relates to the *Reſolution*, as the Means of fulfilling it, and the *Reſolution* relates to the *Diſpoſition*, both as the End of deſiring it, and as the Motive of obtaining it. The *Reſolution* occurs firſt in the Words.

I will run, &c.] The *Way* reſolved on is that of *God's Commandments*, not the Road of the polluted World, not the crooked Ways of his own Heart, but the High-way, the Royal Way, the ſtraight Way of the Kingdom, and that in the Notion of Subjection and Obedience, the *Way of thy Command-ments*. This *Man* naturally ſtruggles againſt and repines at. To be limited and bounded by a Law is a Reſtraint, and a vain Man could poſſibly find in his Heart to do many of the ſame Things that are commanded, but he would not be tied, would have his Liberty, and do it of his own Choice. This is the *Enmity of the carnal Mind* againſt God, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, *it is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither can it be*; it breaks theſe Bonds, and caſts away the Cords of his Authority. This is Sin, the Tranſgreſſion of a Law, and this made the firſt Sin ſo great, though in a Matter one would think ſmall, the eating of the Fruit of a Tree; it was Rebellion againſt the Majeſty of God, caſting off his Law and Authority, and aſpiring to an imagin'd Self-Deity. And this is ſtill the treaſonable Pride, or Independency, and Wickedneſs of our Nature, riſing up againſt God that formed us of nothing.

And this is the Power and Subſtance of Religion, the new Impreſs of God upon the Heart, and Obedience and Reſignment to him, to be given up to him as entirely his, to be moulded and ordered as he

he will, to be ſubject to his Laws and Appointments in all Things, to have every Action, and every Word, under a Rule and Law, and the Penalty to be ſo high, eternal Death. All this to a carnal or haughty Mind is hard; not only every Action and Word, but even every Thought too, muſt be ſubject; not ſo much as thought-free, *every Thought is brought into Captivity*, (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, and ſo the licentious Mind accounts it) not only the Affections and Deſires, but the very Reaſonings and Imaginations are brought under this Law.

2 Cor. x. 5.

λογισμοί.

Now to yield this as reaſonable and due to God, to own his Sovereignty, and to acknowledge the Law to be holy, juſt and good; to approve, yea, to love it, even there where it moſt contradicts and controuls our own corrupt Will, and the Law of Sin in our Fleſh, this is true ſpiritual Obedience; to ſtudy and enquire after the Will of God in all our Ways, what will pleaſe him, and having found it, to follow that which is here called the *Way of his Commandments*; to make this *our Way*, and our Buſineſs in the World, and all other Things but Acceſſaries and By-works; even thoſe lawful Things that may be taken in, and uſed as Helps in our Way. As the Diſciples paſſing through the Corn pluck'd the Ears, and did eat in paſſing, as a By-work, but their Buſineſs was to follow their Maſter. And whatſoever would hinder us in this Way, muſt be watched and guarded againſt. To effect that, we muſt either remove and thruſt it aſide, or if we cannot do that, yet we muſt go over it, and trample it under Foot, were it the Thing or the Perſon that is deareſt to us in the World. Till the Heart be brought to this State and Purpoſe, it is either wholly void of, or very low and weak in the Truth of Religion.

We place Religion much in our accuſtomed Performances,

formances, in coming to Church, hearing and repeating of Sermons, and praying at home, keeping a Road of ſuch and ſuch Duties. The *Way of God's Commandments* is more in *Doing* than in *Diſcourſe*. In many, Religion evaporates itſelf too much out by the Tongue, while it appears too little in their *Ways*. Oh! but this is the main; one Act of Charity, Meekneſs, or Humility, ſpeaks more than a Day's Diſcourſe. All the Means we uſe in Religion are intended for a further *End*, which if they attain not, they are nothing. This *End* is to mortify and purify the Heart, to mould it to the Way of God's Commandments in the whole Tract of our Lives; in our private Converſe one with another, and our retired ſecret Converſe with ourſelves; to have God ſtill before us, and his Law our Rule in all we do; that he may be our Meditation Day and Night, and that his Law may be our *Counſellor*, as this Pſalm hath it, to regulate all our Deſigns, and the Works of our Callings by it. *To walk ſoberly*, and *godly*, and *righteouſly in this preſent World*; to curb and croſs our own Wills where they croſs God's; to deny ourſelves our own Humour and Pride, our Paſſions and Pleaſures, to have all thoſe ſubdued, and brought under, by the Power of the Law of Love within us. This, and nothing below this, is the End of Religion. Alas! amongſt Multitudes that are called Chriſtians, ſome there may be that ſpeak and appear like it, yet how few are there that make this their Buſineſs, and aſpire to this, *The Way of God's Commandments*.

His intended Courſe in this Way, he expreſſes by *running*; it is good to be in this Way even in the ſloweſt Motions, Love will *creep* where it cannot *go*. But if thou art ſo indeed, then thou wilt long for a ſwifter Motion; if thou do but creep, be doing, creep on, yet deſire to be enabled to go; if thou goeſt, but yet halting

ing and lamely, deſire to be ſtrengthned to walk ſtraight, and if thou walkeſt, let not that ſatisfy thee, deſire to *run*. So here *David* did *walk* in this Way; but he earneſtly wiſhes to mend his Pace, he would willingly *run*, and for that End he deſires an *enlarged Heart*.

Some diſpute and deſcant too much whether they go or no, and childiſhly tell their Steps, and would know at every Pace whether they advance or no, and how much they advance, and thus amuſe themſelves, and ſpend the Time of doing, and going, in queſtioning and doubting. Thus it is with many Chriſtians, but it were a more wiſe and comfortable Way, to be endeavouring onwards, and if thou make little Progreſs, at leaſt to be deſiring to make more; to be praying and walking, and praying that thou may'ſt walk faſter, and that in the End thou may'ſt run, not ſatisfied with any thing attained, but yet by that Unſatisfiedneſs not to be ſo dejected as to ſit down, or ſtand ſtill, but rather excited to go on. So it was with St. *Paul*, *Philip.* iii. 13. *Forgetting theſe things which are behind, and* reaching forth *unto thoſe things which are before, I preſs forward.* If any one thinks that he hath done well and run far, and will take a Pauſe, the great Apoſtle is of another Mind, *Not as if I had attained.* Oh no! far from that, he ſtill ſets forward, as if nothing were done, as a Runner, not ſtill looking back how much he hath run, but forward to what he is to run, *ſtretching forth* to that, inflamed with frequent Looks at the Mark and End. Some are retarded by looking on what is paſt, as not ſatisfied, they have done nothing as they think, and ſo ſtand ſtill diſcontented; but even in that Way, it is not good to look too much to things behind, we muſt forget them rather and preſs onwards.

ἐπεκτεινόμενος.

Some, if they have gone on well, and poſſibly

run

run a while, yet if they fall, then they are ready, in a deſperate Malecontent, to ly ſtill, and think all is loſt; and in this peeviſh fretting at their Falls, ſome Men pleaſe themſelves, and take it for Repentance, whereas indeed it is not that, but rather Pride and Humour; Repentance is a more ſubmiſſive humble thing. But this is that which troubles ſome Men at their new Falls, (eſpecially if after a long time of even walking or running) they think their Project is now ſpoiled, their Thoughts are broken off, they would have had ſomewhat to have rejoiced in, if they had ſtill gone on to the End, but being diſappointed of that, they think they had as good let alone, and give over. Oh! but the humble Chriſtian is better taught, his Falls teach him indeed to abhor himſelf, they diſcover his own Weakneſs to him, and empty him of Self-truſt, but they do not diſmay him to get up and go on, not boldly and careleſly forgetting his Fall, but in the humble Senſe of it walking the more warily, but not the leſs ſwiftly; yea, the more ſwiftly too, making the more haſte to regain the Time loſt by the Fall. So then if you would run in this Way, depend on the Strength of God, and on his Spirit, leading thee, that ſo thou mayeſt not fall, and yet if thou doſt fall, ariſe; and if thou art plunged in the Mire, go to the Fountain opened for Sin and Uncleanneſs, and waſh there, bemoan thyſelf before thy Lord; and if hurt, and bleeding by thy Fall, yet look to him, deſire Jeſus to pity thee, and bind up, and cure thy Wound, waſhing off thy Blood, and pouring in of his own.

However it is with thee, give not over, faint not, run on; and that thou mayeſt run the more eaſily and expeditely, make thyſelf as light as may be, *lay aſide every Weight*, *Heb.* xii. 1, 2. Clog not thyſelf with unneceſſary Burdens of Earth, and eſpecially lay aſide that, that, of all other things, weighs

the heavieſt, and cleaves the cloſeſt, *the Sin that ſo eaſily beſets us*, and is ſo hardly put off us, that folds ſo connaturally to us, and we therefore think will not hinder us much. And not only the Sins that are more outward, but the inner cloſe-cleaving Sins, the Sin that moſt of all ſits eaſily to us, not only our Cloak, but our inner Coat, away with that too, as our Savour ſays in another Caſe, and *run the Race ſet before us*, our appointed Stage, and that *with Patience*, under all Oppoſitions, and Diſcouragements from the World without, and Sin within. And to encourage thee in this, look to ſuch a *Cloud of Witneſſes* that compaſſeth us about to further us; as Troubles, Temptations and Sin, do to hinder us. *They* encountered the like *Sufferings*, and were encountered with the like *Sins*, and yet they run on and got home. *Alexander* would have run in the *Olympick* Games if he had had Kings to run with: Now in this Race, Kings, and Prophets, and righteous Perſons, run; yea, all are indeed a *kingly Generation*, each one Heir to a Crown as the *Prize* of this Race.

And if theſe encourage thee but little, then *look* beyond them, above that Cloud of Witneſſes, to the *Sun*, the *Sun of Righteouſneſs*; looking off from all things here, that would either entangle thee, or diſcourage thee, taking thine Eye off from them, and *looking to him* that will powerfully draw thee and animate thee. *Look to Jeſus* not only as thy *Forerunner* in this Race, but alſo as thy *Undertaker* in it, *the Author and Finiſher of our Faith.* His attaining the End of the Race is the Pledge of thy attaining, if thou follow him chearfully on the ſame Encouragements that he looked to, *who for the Joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, and deſpiſed the Shame, and is now ſet down at the Right Hand of God.*

When thou ſhalt enlarge my Heart.] In all Beings, the Heart is the Principle of Motion, and according

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as it is more or leſs perfect in its Kind, thoſe Motions that flow from it, are more or leſs vigorous. Therefore hath the *Pſalmiſt* good Reaſon, to the end his ſpiritual Courſe may be the ſtedfaſter, and the faſter, to deſire that the Principle of it, *the Heart*, may be more enabled and diſpoſed, which here he expreſſes by its being *enlarged*.

What this *Enlargement of the Heart* is, a Man's own inward Senſe ſhould eaſily explain to him. Sure it would, did Men reflect on it, and were they acquainted with their own Hearts, but the moſt are not. They would find the carnal natural Heart, a narrow contracted hampered thing, bound with Cords and Chains of its own twiſting and forging, and ſo incapable of *walking*, much leſs of *running* in this Way of God's Commandments, till it be freed and enlarged.

The Heart is taken generally in Scripture, for the whole Soul, the *Underſtanding* and *Will*, in its ſeveral Affections and Motions; and the Speech being here of an *enlarged Heart*, it ſeems very congruous to take it in the moſt enlarged Senſe.

It is ſaid of *Solomon*, that he had a *large Heart* (the ſame Word that is here) *as the Sand of the Sea-ſhore*; that is, a vaſt comprehenſive Spirit, that could fathom much of Nature, both its greater and leſſer things. *He ſpoke of Trees, from the Cedar in* Lebanon, *to the Hyſop in the Wall, and of great Beaſts, and ſmall creeping things.*

Thus I conceive, the *Enlargement of the Heart* compriſeth the enlightening of the Underſtanding. There ariſes a clearer Light there, to diſcern ſpiritual Things in a more ſpiritual Manner; to ſee the vaſt Difference betwixt the vain things the World goes after, and the true ſolid Delight that is in the *Way of God's Commandments*; to know the falſe Bluſh of the Pleaſures of Sin, and what Deformity is under

that painted Mask, and not be allured by it; to have enlarged Apprehenſions of God, his Excellency, and Greatneſs, and Goodneſs; how worthy he is to be obeyed and ſerved. This is the great Dignity and Happineſs of the Soul, all other Pretenſions are low and poor, in reſpect of this. Here then is Enlargement to ſee the Purity and Beauty of his Law, how juſt and reaſonable, yea, how pleaſant and amiable it is; that his Commandments are not grievous, that they are Beds of Spices, the more we walk in them, ſtill the more of their fragrant Smell and Sweetneſs we find.

And then conſequently, upon the larger and clearer Knowledge of theſe things, the Heart dilates itſelf in Affection; the more it knows of God, ſtill the more it loves him, and the leſs it loves this preſent World; Love is the great *Enlarger* of the Heart to all Obedience. Then nothing is hard, yea, the harder things become the more delightful.

All Love of other things doth pinch and contract the Heart, for they are all narrower than itſelf. It is framed to that Wideneſs in its firſt Creation, capable of enjoying God, though not of a full comprehending him. Therefore all other things gather it in, and ſtraiten it from its natural Size, only the Love of God ſtretches and dilates it. He is large enough for it, yea, it, in its fulleſt Enlargement, is infinitely too narrow for him. Do not all find it, if they will ask themſelves, that in all other Loves and Purſuits in this World, there is ſtill ſomewhat that pinches? The Soul is not at its full Size, but as a Foot in a ſtrait Shoe, is ſomewhere bound and pained, and cannot go freely, much leſs run; tho' another that looks on cannot tell where, yet each one feels it. But when the Soul is ſet free from theſe narrow things, and is raiſed to the Love of God, then is it at eaſe, and at large, and hath Room enough;

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it is both *elevated* and *dilated*. And this Word ſignifies a *high-raiſed* Soul, and is ſometimes taken for *proud* and *lofty*; but there is a *Greatneſs* and *Height* of Spirit in the Love of God, and Union with him, that doth not vainly ſwell and lift it up, but with the deepeſt *Humility*, joins the *higheſt* and *trueſt Magnanimity*. It ſets the Soul above the Snares that ly here below, in which moſt Men creep and are intangled, in that *Way of Life that is on high to the Juſt*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks.

Good Reaſon hath *David* to join theſe together, and to deſire the one as the Spring and Cauſe of the other. An *enlarged Heart*, that he might *run the Way of God's Commandments*.

Senſible Joys and Conſolations in God, do encourage and enlarge the Heart, but theſe are not ſo general to all, nor ſo conſtant to any. Love is the abounding fixed Spring of ready Obedience, and will make the Heart chearful in ſerving God, even without thoſe felt Comforts, when he is pleaſed to deny, or withdraw them.

In that Courſe or Race, is underſtood *Conſtancy*, *Activity* and *Alacrity*, and all theſe flow from the Enlargement of the Heart.

1. *Conſtancy*: A narrow enthralled Heart, fetter'd with the Love of lower things, and cleaving to ſome particular Sins, or but ſome one, and that ſecret, may keep Foot a while in the Way of God's Commandments, in ſome Steps of them; but it muſt give up quickly, is not able to run on to the End of the Goal. But a Heart that hath laid aſide every Weight, and the moſt cloſe-cleaving and beſetting Sin (as it is in that Place to the *Hebrews*) hath ſtript itſelf of all that may faulter or intangle it, it runs, and runs on, without fainting or wearying, it is at large, hath nothing that pains it in the Race.

2. *Activity*: Not only holding on, but running, which

which is a ſwift nimble Race. It ſtands not bargaining and diſputing, but once knowing God's Mind, there is no more Queſtion or Demur. *I made haſte and delayed not*, as in this *Pſalm* the Word is, did not ſtay upon why, and wherefore; he ſtood not to reaſon the Matter but run on. And this Love, enlarging the Heart, makes it abundant in the Work of the Lord, quick and active, diſpatching much in a little time.

3. *Alacrity:* All done with Chearfulneſs, ſo no other Conſtraint is needful, where this overpowering ſweet Conſtraint of Love is. *I will run*, not be hauled, and drawn as by Force, but *skip* and *leap*, as the evangelick Promiſe is, that the *lame ſhall leap as an Hart, and the Tongue of the dumb ſing: For in the Wilderneſs ſhall Waters break out, and Streams in the Deſart*, Iſa. xxxv. 6. The Spouſe deſires her Beloved *to haſten as a Roe and Hind on the Mountains of Spices*, and ſhe doth *ſo*, and each faithful Soul runs towards him, to meet him in his Way.

It is a ſad heavy thing to do any thing as in Obedience to God, while the Heart is ſtraitned, not enlarged towards him by his divine Love; but that once taking Poſſeſſion, and enlarging the Heart, that inward Principle of Obedience, makes the outward Obedience ſweet, it is then a natural Motion. Indeed, the Soul runs in the Ways of God, as the Sun in his Courſe, which finds no Difficulty, being naturally fitted and carried to that Motion, he *goes forth as a Bridegroom, and rejoiceth as a ſtrong Man to run a Race.*

This is the great Point that our Souls ſhould be ſtudious of, to attain more *Evenneſs*, and *Nimbleneſs*, and *Chearfulneſs*, in the Ways of God, and for this End we ought to ſeek above all things this *enlarged Heart*; it is want of this makes us bog, and drive heavily, and run long upon little Ground. Oh! my Be-

Beloved, how ſhallow and narrow are our Thoughts of God? Moſt even of thoſe that are truly godly, yet are led on by a kind of Inſtinct, and carried they ſcarce know how, to give ſome Attendance on God's Worſhip, and to the Avoidance of groſs Sin, and go on in a blameleſs Courſe. It is better thus, than to run to Exceſs of *Riot* and open Wickedneſs, with the ungodly World. But, alas! this is but a dull, heavy, and languid Motion, where the Heart is not enlarged by the daily growing Love of God. Few, few are acquainted with that delightful Contemplation of God, that ventilates and raiſes this Flame of Love. Petty things bind and contract our Spirits, ſo that they feel little Joy in God, little ardent active Deſire to do him Service, to crucify Sin, to break and undo Self-love within us, to root up our own Wills to make Room for his, that his alone may be ours, that we may have no Will of our own, that our daily Work may be to grow more like him in the Beauty of Holineſs. You think it a hard Saying, to part with your carnal Luſts and Delights, and the common Ways of the World, and to be tied to a ſtrict exact Converſation all your Days. But oh! the Reaſon of this is, becauſe the Heart is yet ſtraitned, and enthralled by the baſe Love of theſe mean things, and that is from the Ignorance of things higher and better. One Glance of God, a Touch of his Love will free and enlarge the Heart, ſo that it can deny all, and part with all, and make an entire renouncing of all, to follow *Him*. It ſees enough in *Him*, and in *Him* alone, and therefore can neither quietly reſt on, nor earneſtly deſire any thing beſide *Him*.

Oh! that you would apply your Hearts to conſider the Excellency of this Way of God's Commandments. Our wretched Hearts are prejudiced, they think it melancholy and ſad. Oh! there is no Way truly

truly joyous but this, *They ſhall ſing in the Ways of the Lord*, ſays the Prophet. Do not Men, when their Eyes are opened, ſee a Beauty in Meekneſs, and Temperance, and Humility, a preſent Delightfulneſs and Quietneſs in them; whereas in Pride, and Paſſion, and Intemperance, there is nothing but Vexation and Diſquiet. And then conſider the *End* of this Way, and this Race in it, *Reſt and Peace* for ever; 'tis the Way of *Peace*, both in its own Nature, and in reſpect of its End. Did you believe that Joy and Glory that is ſet before you in this Way, you would not any of you defer a Day longer, but forthwith you would break from all that holds you back, and enter into this Way, and run on chearfully in it. The Perſuaſion of theſe great Things *above* would enlarge and greaten the Heart, and make the greateſt Things *here* very little in your Eyes.

But would you attain to this enlarged Heart for this Race; as you ought to apply your Thoughts to theſe divine Things, and ſtretch them on the Promiſes made in the Word; above all, take *David's* Courſe, ſeek this Enlargement of Heart from God's own Hand, for it is here propounded and laid before God by way of Requeſt: "See what is my "Deſire, I would gladly ſerve thee better, and ad-"vance more in *the Way of thy Commandments*. Now "this I cannot do till my Heart be more enlarged, "and that cannot be but by thy Hand, *When thou "ſhalt enlarge my Heart.*" Preſent this Suit often, it is in his Power to do it for thee; he can ſtretch and expand thy ſtraitned Heart, can ſpread and hoiſe the Sails within thee, and then carry thee on ſwiftly; filling them not with the vain Air of Man's Applauſe, which readily run a Soul upon Rocks and ſplits it, but with the ſweet Breathings and ſoft Gales of

of his own Spirit, that carry it ſtraight to the deſired Haven.

Findeſt thou Sin cleaving to thee and clogging thee, cry to him, "Help Lord, ſet me free from "my narrow Heart. — I ſtrive but in vain without "thee, ſtill it continues ſo. — I know little of thee, "my Affections are dead and cold towards thee. — "Lord I deſire to love thee, here is my Heart, and "leſt it fly out, lay hold on it, and take thine "own Way with it, though it ſhould be in a pain-"ful Way, yet draw it forth, yea draw it that it "may run after thee." All is his own working, and all his Motive is his own free Grace. Let who will fancy themſelves Maſters of their own Hearts, and think to enlarge them by the Strength of their own Stretches of Speculation; they alone, they alone are in the ſure and happy Way of attaining it, that humbly ſuit and wait for this Enlargement of Heart from his Hand that made it.

SERMON XVI.

ROM. VIII. 33, 34.

Who ſhall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that juſtifieth, &c.

OTHER Men may fancy and boaſt as they pleaſe, but there are none in the World but the Godly alone that are furniſh'd with ſufficiently ſtrong Supports and Comforts againſt all poſſible Hazards, and of theſe doth the Apoſtle treat moſt freely, ſweetly and plentifully in this Chapter. He ſecures Believers in their Chriſt, touching theſe

two great Evils, *After-Condemnation*, and *preſent Affliction*, that the one cannot befal them, and the other cannot hurt them.

For their Immunity from the *former*, they have the clear Word of the Goſpel, and the Seal of the Spirit; and that former Privilege made ſure, as the far greater, doth ſecure the other as the *leſſer*.

They are freed from Condemnation, and not only ſo, but intitled and inſured to a Kingdom. And what Hurt then can Affliction do? Yea, it doth Good; yea, not only it cannot rob them of their Crown, but it carries them on towards it, is their High-way to it: *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo be glorified together.* Yea, all Things to the Children of God do prove Advantage; ſeverally taken, in their preſent Senſe, they may ſeem evil, but taken jointly in their after Iſſue, their working together are all for good. In their ſimple Nature poſſibly they are Poiſon, yet contempered and prepared, they ſhall prove medicinal. *All theſe Things are againſt me*, ſaid old *Jacob*, and yet he lived to ſee even all theſe were for him. The Children of God are indeed ſo happy, that the harſheſt Things in their Way change their Nature, and become ſweet and profitable. This much is effected by their Prayers, that have a Divine Incantation in them. They breathe forth the Expreſſions of that their Love to God, by which they are character'd, *them that love God*; and *that* is put on their Hearts, the *Impreſſion* of *his Love to them*, to which they are here led, by the Apoſtle, as to the Spring-head of all. All their Comforts and Privileges flow thence, yea, all their Love, and their Faith, appropriating thoſe Comforts and Privileges. Yea, the very Treaſury of all together, *Jeſus Chriſt* himſelf is the free Gift of this free Love; He, as the greateſt, aſcertains all Things beſides as unſpeakably leſs, *Ver.* 32.

Theſe

Theſe two are ſuch mighty Arguments, that no Difficulty nor Grief can ſtand before them. The *Love of God*; He is with us, who then againſt us? All the World it may be, but that all is nothing. Once it was nothing; it was that God, that is our God, that loves us and is for us, that made it ſomething, and if he will, it may again be nothing. And as it is at its beſt, it is nothing, being compared with *another Gift* that he hath beſtowed on us, and having beſtowed that, ſure if there be any thing in this World can do us any good, we ſhall not want it. *He that ſpared not his own Son, but gave him to the Death for us, will he not with him give us all Things?*

And to cloſe all, he makes theſe two great Immunities good to us in *Chriſt*. He fixes *there*; *there* we are freed from all Fear of Condemnation, or of being hurt by Affliction. No Accuſation nor Guiltineſs can annul the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and that is made ours; no Diſtreſs nor Suffering can cut us off from the Love of God: And if it cannot do that, we need not fear it, all other Hazards are no Hazard, that being ſure.

And in Confidence of this, the Apoſtle gives the Defiance, caſts a Challenge to Angels, to Men, to all the World, upon theſe two Points, Who ſhall *accuſe?* Who ſhall *ſeparate?* Accuſe to God, or ſeparate from him. Whatſoever Times may come, the hardeſt that any can apprehend or foretel, if theſe two be not ſufficient Furniture againſt them, I know not what is.

Men are commonly buſied about other Events concerning *them* and *theirs*, what ſhall become of *this* or the *other*, and what if this or that fall out; but the Conſcience once raiſed to this Enquiry, the Soul being awake to diſcern the Hazard of eternal Death, all other Fears and Queſtions are drowned

and loſt in this great Queſtion, " Am I condemned " or not? Is my Sin pardoned or no?"

And then a ſatisfying Anſwer received concerning this, all is quiet, the Soul repoſes ſweetly on God, and puts all its other Concernments into his Hands. " Let him make me poor and deſpiſed, let him ſmite " and chaſtiſe me, he hath forgiven my Sin, all is " well." That Burden taken off, the Soul can go light, yea, can leap and dance under all other Burdens. Oh! how it feels itſelf nimble, as a Man eaſed of a Load that he was even fainting under. Oh! bleſſed the Man whoſe Sin is taken off, *lifted from his Shoulders*, (that's the Word, *Pſal.* xxxii. 1.) laid over upon Chriſt, who could *bear* the whole Load, and *take* it *away*, take it out of Sight, which we could never have done; no, they would have ſunk us for ever. That one Word αἴρει, *Joh.* i. ſignifies both, and anſwers to the two, *Iſa.* liii. *He hath born our Grief, and carried our Sorrows*; lifted them away. Oh! how ſweet a Burden, inſtead of this, is that Engagement of *Obedience* and *Love* to him as our Redeemer, and that is all he lays on us. If we follow him, and bear his Croſs, he is our Strength, and bears both it and us. So then this is the great Point, the Heart's Eaſe, to be delivered from the condemning Weight of Sin.

And certainly, while Men do not think thus, their Hearts have very ſlight Impreſſions of the Truth of theſe Things. I fear the moſt of us ſcarce believe this Condemnation to come, at leaſt very ſhallowly, and ſo they cannot much conſider the Deliverance from it provided to us in Jeſus Chriſt. I cannot ſee how it is poſſible for a Heart perſuaded of theſe, to be very careful about any thing beſide. You that eat and drink, and labour and trade, and beſtow all your Time, either in the Pains or the Pleaſures of this Earth, what think you of Eternity?

Is it a light thing for you to periſh for ever? After a few Days vainly ſpent, to fall under the Wrath of God for ever? Oh! that you would be perſuaded to think on theſe Things.

And you that have an Intereſt in this free and bleſſed Eſtate, why are your Spirits ſo cold, ſo infrequent in the Thoughts of it? Why are you not rejoicing in the Lord? Gladening yourſelves in ſecret when you remember this: "Go the World as "it will, my Sin is forgiven me; miſtake me, ac- "cuſe me whoſo will, my God hath acquitted me "in his Chriſt, and He loves me, and lives to inter- "cede for me."

Methinks I hear ſome ſay, "Ay, they that could "ſay that, might be merry indeed; but, alas! I have "no ſuch Aſſurance, *Who can lay any thing to the "Charge of God's Elect?* That's true; but here is the "great Point of ſo hard a Reſolution, Am I one of "theſe?"

That the Apoſtle doth thus ſpecify the Owners of this Conſolation, by this high and hidden Character of their Election, is not to render it doubtful and dark; for his main Aim, on the contrary, is both to extend it as far as it can go, and to make it as clear as may be to all that have Intereſt in it: But he deſigns them by the primitive Act of Love fixing on them, ſo as it is now manifeſted to them in the ſubſequent Effects, that flow from the Elect called and ſanctified, and conformed to Jeſus Chriſt, both by his Spirit within them, and the Sufferings that without ariſe againſt them in the World; ſuch as, being *the Sons of God*, are *led by the Spirit of God*, and *walk not after the Fleſh, but after the Spirit.*

And theſe Things indeed conſidered as their Characters, the Stamp of God on them, the Impreſſions of their Election to Life, do check the vain Confidence of all carnal ungodly Profeſſors of the Name

of

of Chriſt, and tell them that their pretended Title to him is a mere Deluſion; certainly, whoſoever lies in the Love of Sin, and takes the Fleſh for his Guide, that accurſed blind Guide is leading him into the Pit. What groſs Folly and Impudence is it for any Man, walking in the Luſts of his own Heart, to fancy and aver himſelf to be a Partner of that Redemption, whereof ſo great a Part is to deliver us from the Power of our Iniquities, to renew our Hearts, and reunite them to God, and poſſeſs them with his Love.

The great Evidence of thy Election is Love. Thy Love to him gives certain Teſtimony of his preceeding eternal Love to thee, ſo are they here deſigned, they *that love God*, thy chuſing him is the Effect and Evidence of his chuſing thee. Now this is not laborious, that needs to be diſputed, amidſt all thy Frailties; feel the Pulſe of thine Affection, which way beats it, and ask thy Heart whether thou love him or not, in this thou haſt the Character of thy Election.

Know you not, that the redeemed of Chriſt and he are one, they live one Life, Chriſt lives in them, and if *any Man hath not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, as the Apoſtle declares in this Chapter? So then, this we are plainly to tell you, and conſider it, you that will not let go your Sins to lay hold on Chriſt, have as yet no Share in him.

But on the other Side: The Truth is, that when Souls are once ſet upon this Search, they commonly wind the Notion too high, and ſubtilize too much in the Diſpute, and ſo entangle and perplex themſelves, and drive themſelves further off from that Comfort that they are ſeeking after; ſuch Meaſures and Marks of Grace, they ſet to themſelves for their Rule and Standard; and unleſs they find thoſe without all Controverſy in themſelves, they will not believe that they

they have an Intereſt in Chriſt, and this bleſſed and ſafe Eſtate in him.

To ſuch I would only ſay, Are you in a willing League with any known Sin? Yea, would you willingly, if you might be ſaved in that Way, give up yourſelf to Voluptuouſneſs and Ungodlineſs, and not at all deſire to follow Jeſus Chriſt in the Way of Holineſs? Then truly, I have not any thing as yet to ſay for your Comfort, only there is a Salvation provided, and the Door is yet open, and your Heart may be changed. But on the other Side, are the Deſires of thy Soul after Chriſt, whole Chriſt, to be Righteouſneſs, and withal Sanctification to thee? Wouldſt thou willingly give up thyſelf to be ruled by him, and have him thy King? Hadſt thou rather chuſe to ſuffer the greateſt Affliction for his Sake, to honour him, than to commit the leaſt Sin to diſpleaſe him? Doth thy Heart go out after him, when thou heareſt him ſpoke of? Doſt thou account him thy Treaſure, ſo that all the World ſounds but as an empty Shell to thee, when he is named? Says thy Soul within thee, oh! that he were mine? And, oh! that I were his, that I could pleaſe him, and live to him? Then do not toſs thy Spirit, and jangle and ſpin out thy Thoughts in fruitleſs, endleſs Doubtings, but cloſe with this as thy Portion, and be of good Comfort, thy Sins are, or will be forgiven thee.

I add yet further, if thou ſay'ſt yet, that thou findeſt none of all this, yet I ſay, there is Warrant for thee to believe and lay hold on this Righteouſneſs here held forth, to the end that thou may'ſt then find thoſe things in thee, and find Comfort in them. Thou art convinced of Ungodlineſs, then believe on him that juſtifies the Ungodly, thou art condemned, yet Chriſt is dead and riſen, fly to him as ſuch, as the Lamb ſlain, *he that was dead and is alive*, and then

then ſay, *Who is he that condemneth? It is Chriſt that died, or rather that is riſen. Who ſhall accuſe?* It is true, they may clamour and make a Noiſe, both *Satan* and thy Conſcience, but how can they faſten any Accuſation on thee? If they dare accuſe, yet they cannot condemn, when the Judge hath acquitted thee, and declared thee free, who is greater than all, and hath the abſolute Power of the Sentence; all Charges, and Libels come too late after he hath once pronounced a Soul righteous. And who ſhall condemn, *it is Chriſt that died*, if the Sentence of the Law be brought forth? Yet here is the Anſwer, It ought not to be *twice* ſatisfied; now once it is in Chriſt, he hath died, and that ſtands for the Believer. Whoſoever flies to him, and lays hold on him for Life, he cannot dy again; nor canſt thou dy, for whom he died once, or rather is riſen; that raiſes the Aſſurance higher, and ſets it firmer; for this evidences that in his Death all was paid, when he being the Surety and ſeized on for the Debt, and once Death's Priſoner, yet was ſet free. This clears the Matter that there is no more to be ſaid; and yet further, in ſign that all is done, he is raiſed to the Height of Honour above all Principalities and Powers, is ſet at the right Hand of the Father, and there he ſits and lives to make Interceſſion, to ſue out the fulfilling of all for Believers, the bringing of them home, lives to ſee all made good that he died and covenanted for; ſo now his Righteouſneſs is thine that believeſt, any Challenge muſt meet with Chriſt firſt, and if it ſeize not on him, it cannot light on thee, for thou art in him, married to him. And the ſame Triumph that he ſpeaks, *Iſa.* l. 8. whence theſe Words are borrowed, that is made thine, and thou may'ſt now ſpeak it in him. I know not what can caſt him down that hath this Word to reſt upon, and to comfort himſelf in.

SER-

SERMON XVII.

ROM. VIII. 35. &c.

Who ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of Chriſt? Shall Tribulation, or Diſtreſs, or Perſecution, or Famine, or Nakedneſs, or Peril, or Sword? &c.

IS this he that ſo lately cried out, *O wretched Man that I am! Who ſhall deliver me?* That now triumphs, O happy Man! *Who ſhall ſeparate us from the Love of Chriſt?*

Yes, it is the ſame. Pained then with the Thoughts of that miſerable Conjunction with a Body of Death, and ſo crying out, who will deliver? Who will ſeparate me from that now? Now he hath found a Deliverer to do that for him, to whom he is for ever united, and he glories now in his inſeparable Union, and unalterable Love, that none can divide him from; yea, it is through him, that preſently after that Word of Complaint he praiſes God, and now in him he triumphs. So vaſt a Difference is there betwixt a Chriſtian, taken in himſelf, and in Chriſt; when he views himſelf in himſelf, then he is nothing but a poor, miſerable, polluted, periſhing Wretch; but then he looks again, and ſees himſelf in Chriſt, and there he is rich, and ſafe, and happy, he triumphs, and he glories in it above all the painted Proſperities, and againſt all the horrid Adverſities of the World, he lives in his Chriſt content and happy, and laughs at all Enemies.

And he extends his Triumph, he makes a common Good of it to all Believers, ſpeaks it in their Name, *who ſhall ſeparate us?* and would have them partake of the ſame Confidence, and ſpeak in the ſame Stile with him. It is vain that Men fancy theſe

to be Expreſſions of Revelations, or ſome ſingularly privileged Aſſurances, then they would not ſuit their End, which is clearly and undoubtedly the Encouragement of all the Children of God, upon Grounds that are peculiar to them from all the reſt of the World, but common to them all, in all Ages, and all Varieties of Condition.

It is true, all of them have not alike clear and firm Apprehenſion of their happy and ſure Eſtate, and ſcarce any of them are alike at all Times; yet they have all and always the ſame Right to this Eſtate, and to the Comfort of it, and when they ſtand in a right Light to view it, they do ſee it ſo, and rejoice in it.

There be indeed ſome kind of Aſſurances that are more rare and extraordinary, ſome immediate Glances, or Coruſcations of the Love of God upon the Soul of a Believer; a Smile of his Countenance, and this doth exceedingly refreſh, yea, raviſh the Soul, and enables it mightily for Duties and Sufferings. Theſe he diſpenſes arbitrarily and freely where and when he will; ſome weaker Chriſtians ſometimes have them, while ſtronger are Strangers to them, the Lord training them to live more contentedly by Faith till the Day of Viſion come.

And that is the other, the leſs extatical, but the more conſtant and fixed kind of Aſſurance, the proper Aſſurance of Faith, The Soul by believing cleaves unto God in Chriſt as he offers himſelf in the Goſpel, and thence is poſſeſt with a ſweet and calm Perſuaſion of his Love, that being the proper work, to appropriate him, to make Chriſt, and in him eternal Life, ours: So it is the proper Reſult and Fruit of that its acting, eſpecially when it acts any thing ſtrongly to quiet the Soul in him; then *being juſtified by Faith, we have Peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, and from that Peace, Joy; yea even

even glorying in Tribulation, as there follows. And theſe ſpringing not from an extraordinary Senſe or View, but from the very innate Virtue of Faith working kindly, and according to its own Nature.

Therefore many Chriſtians do prejudice their own Comfort, and darken their Spirits, by not giving Freedom to Faith to act according to its Nature and proper Principles; they will not believe till they find ſome Evidence, or Aſſurance, which is quite to invert the Order of the thing, and to look for Fruit without ſettling a Root for it to grow from.

Would you take Chriſt upon the abſolute Word of Promiſe tendring him to you, and reſt on him, ſo this would ingraft you into Life itſelf, for that he is, and ſo thoſe Fruits of the Holy Ghoſt would bud and flouriſh in your Hearts; from that very believing on him, would ariſe this Perſuaſion, yea, even to a Gloriation, and an humble Boaſting in his Love, *who ſhall accuſe*, who *ſhall condemn*, who *ſhall ſeparate?*

The undivided Companion, and undoubted Helper and Preſerver of this Confidence of Faith, is an *active Love* to Chriſt, a conſtant Study of Holineſs, and Striſe againſt Sin, which is the grand Enemy of Faith, that obſtructs the very vital Spirits of Faith, that makes it ſickly and heavy in its Actings, and cauſes the Palſy in the Hand of Faith, that it cannot lay ſo faſt hold. Therefore this you would be careful of, yea, know that of Neceſſity it attends Faith, and as Faith grows, Holineſs will grow, and Holineſs growing will mutually ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh Faith; the Comforts of the Holy Ghoſt are holy purifying Comforts, and the more the Soul is purified, and made holy, the more is it cleared and enlarged, to receive much of theſe Comforts. *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God*; Unholi-

neſs is as Damps and filthy Miſts in the Soul, it darkens all.

Hence it is evident, in what way Chriſtians may and ought to aſpire to this Aſſurance, it is their Portion, and in this Way they are to aſpire to it, and ſhall find it, if not preſently, yet let them wait and go on in this Way, they ſhall not miſcarry.

Again it appears, that this Aſſurance is no Enemy to *holy* Diligence, nor Friend of *carnal* Security; on the contrary, it is the only thing that doth eminently ennoble and embolden the Soul for all Adventures and Services. Baſe Fears and Doubtings, wherein ſome place much of Religion, and many weak Chriſtians ſeem to be in that Miſtake, to think it a kind of holy ſpiritual Temper to be queſtioning and doubting. I ſay, theſe baſe Fears can never produce any thing truly generous, no Height of Obedience, they do nothing but entangle and diſable the Soul for every good Work, *perfect Love caſts out this Fear*, and works a ſweet unperplexing Fear, a holy Warineſs not to offend, which fears nothing elſe. And this Confidence of Love is the great ſecret of Comfort, and of Ability to do God Service. Nothing makes ſo ſtrong and healthful a Conſtitution of Soul as pure Love, it dare ſubmit to God, and reſign itſelf to him, it dare venture itſelf in his Hand, and truſt his Word, and ſeeks no more but how to pleaſe him. A Heart thus compoſed, goes readily and chearfully unto all Services, to do, to ſuffer, to live, to dy, at his Pleaſure, and firmly ſtands to this, that nothing can ſeparate it from that which is ſufficient to it, which is all its Happineſs, the Love of God in Chriſt Jeſus.

That is indeed his Love to us, but ſo as it includes inſeparably the Inſeparableneſs of our Love to him; for obſerve the things ſpecified as moſt likely, if any thing, to ſeparate us; ſhall *Tribulation*, *Diſtreſs*, &c.

Now

Now theſe eſpecially, being endured for his Sake, cannot immediately have any likely Viſage of altering his Love to us, but rather confirm us in it; but theſe ſhall not ſeparate us neither by altering our Love to him, by driving us from him, and carrying us into any way of Defection, or Denial of his Name, and ſo cut us off from our Union with him, and Intereſt in his Love; and that is the Way wherein the weak Chriſtian will moſt apprehend the Hazard of Separation. Now the Apoſtle ſpeaks his own Senſe, and would raiſe in his Brethren the ſame Confidence, as to that Danger.

No Fear; not one of theſe Things ſhall be able to carry us away: Theſe mighty Waves ſhall not unſettle our Faith, nor quench the Flame of our Love; we ſhall be Victors and more, in all, but how? *Through him that hath loved us.*

This his Love makes ſure ours; he hath ſuch hold of our Hearts as he will not let go, nor ſuffer us to let go our hold: All is faſt by his Strength. He will not loſe us, nor ſhall any be able to pluck us out of his Hand.

Jeſus Chriſt is the *Medium* of this Love, the middle Link that keeps all ſafe together betwixt God and Man, ſo cloſe united in his perſonal Nature, and the Perſons of Men in and by him, to the Father. So here it is firſt called the *Love of Chriſt*, and then in the Cloſe, the *Love of God in Chriſt*; the Soul firſt carried to him as neareſt, but ſo carried by him into that primitive Love of God that flows in Chriſt, and that gave even Chriſt to us as before. And this is the Bottom-truth, the firm Ground of the Saints Perſeverance, which Men not taking aright, muſt needs queſtion the Matter, yea, may put it out of queſtion upon their Suppoſitions: For if our own Purpoſes and Strength were all we had to rely on, alas! how ſoon were we ſhaken?

So

So the Love of God in Chriſt is not only here mentioned as the Point of Happineſs, from which we cannot be removed, but as the Principle of Firmneſs that makes itſelf ſure of us, and us of it, and will not part with us.

Now it is no Pride in a Chriſtian, but the trueſt Humility, to triumph and glory in this. This is it that makes all ſure; this is the great Comfort, and the Victory of the Saints.

He that loved us, and bought us ſo dear, will not lightly ſlip from us, yea, upon no Terms will he let us go, unleſs ſome ſtronger than he is meet with him, and by Force bereave him of us; which we know is impoſſible. He and his Father, who are one in themſelves, and in their Strength, and one in this Love, are greater and ſtronger than all; and he that once overcame for us, always overcomes in us.

Thus he lets Temptations and Tribulations aſſault us, and this neither unargues his Love, nor endangers his Right to us; yea, it doth but give Proof and Evidence of the invincible Firmneſs of both. He ſuffers others to ly ſoft, and ſit warm, and pamper their Fleſh at leiſure; but he hath nobler Buſineſs for his Champions, his Worthies, and moſt of all for the ſtouteſt of them, he calls them forth to honourable Services, to the hardeſt Encounters he ſets them on, one to fight with Sickneſs, another with Poverty, another with Reproaches and Perſecutions, with Priſons and Irons, and with Death itſelf: And all this while, loves he them leſs, or they him? Oh! No, he looks on and rejoices to ſee them do valiantly; it is the Joy of his Heart, no Sight on Earth ſo ſweet to him: And it is all the while by his ſubduing, and in his Strength, that they hold out in the Conflict, and obtain the Conqueſt.

And thus they are the more endeared to him by theſe Services, and theſe Adventures of Love for him,

him, and he ſtill likewiſe is the more endeared to them. Certainly the more any one ſuffers for Chriſt, the more he loves Chriſt, as Love doth grow and engage itſelf by all it does and ſuffers, and burns hotter by what it encounters and overcomes, as by Fewel added to it: As to Jeſus Chriſt by what he ſuffered for us, we are the dearer to him, ſo he is to us by all we ſuffer for his ſake.

Love grows moſt by Oppoſition from others whoſoever, when it is ſure of Acceptance, and the Correſpondence of mutual Love in the Party loved. Above all, this heavenly divine Love is ſtrong as Death, a vehement Flame, a Flame of God indeed, as the Word is, and *many Waters cannot quench it*, not all theſe that here follow one another, *Tribulation*, *Diſtreſs*, *Perſecution*, *Famine*, *Nakedneſs*, *Peril*, *Sword*, yea, in the midſt of theſe, I ſay, it grows; the Soul cleaves cloſer to Chriſt, the more Attempts are made to remove it from him, *though killed all the Day long*. (This Paſſage from the *Pſalm* is moſt fit, both to teſtify that Perſecution is not unuſually the Lot of the Saints, and to give Inſtance of their firm Adherence to God in all Troubles, as the Church there profeſſeth; and if the Saints in that Diſpenſation could reckon in ſuch a Manner, much more ought Chriſtians, upon a clearer Diſcovery of the Covenant of Grace, and their Union with God in Chriſt.) The Saints are as in a common Butchery in the World, yet not only as Sheep for the Slaughter, but ſometimes as Sheep for the Altar, Men thinking it as Sacrifice. They *that kill you* (ſays our Saviour) *ſhall think they do God Service*; yet even this pulls not from him, they part with Life: Ay, why not, this Life is but a Death, and he is our Life for whom we loſe it.

All theſe do but increaſe the Victories and Triumphs of Love, and make it more glorious: As they tell

tell of her multiplying Labours to that Champion, they are not only Conquerors, but more than Conquerors, by multiplied Victories, and they gain in them all both more Honour and more Strength; they are the fitter for new Adventures, and ſo more than ſimple Conquerors. We overcome, and are ſure not to loſe former Conqueſts, but to add more, and conquer on to the End: Which other Conquerors are not ſure of; oftentimes they outlive their own Succeſſes and Renown, and loſe on a ſudden what they have been gaining a whole Lifetime. Not ſo here: We are ſecured in the Author of our Victories, it is through him that hath loved us, and he cannot grow leſs, yea, ſhall ſtill grow greater, till all his Enemies be made his Footſtool.

Having given the Challenge, and finding none to anſwer, and that all, the moſt apparent, are in a moſt rhetorical Accumulation ſilenced, *Tribulation*, *Diſtreſs*, *Perſecution*, *Famine*, *Nakedneſs*, *Peril*, *Sword*, &c. he goes on confidently in the Triumph, and avers his Aſſurance of full and final Victory againſt all imaginable Power of all the Creatures, neither Death nor Life, not the Fear of the moſt terrible Death, nor the Hope or Love of the moſt deſirable Life: And in the Height of this Courage and Confidence, he ſuppoſes impoſſible Enemies, *Angels*, *Principalities*, &c. unleſs you take it of the Angels of Darkneſs only; but if it could be poſſible that the other ſhould offer at ſuch a thing, they would be too weak for it. No Senſe of any preſent Things, or Apprehenſions of Things to come, not any Thing within the vaſt Circle of the World above or below, nor any Creature can do it. Here Sin is not ſpecified, becauſe he is ſpeaking of outward Oppoſitions and Difficulties expreſly, and becauſe that is removed by the former Challenge, *Who ſhall accuſe?* That aſſerting a free and final Acquittance of all Sin, a Pardon of the Curſe,

Curſe, which yet will never encourage any of theſe to ſin that live in the Aſſurance of this Love. Oh! no, and theſe general Words do include it too, *Nothing preſent nor to come*, &c. So it is carried clear, and is the ſatisfying Comfort of all that Jeſus Chriſt hath drawn after him, and united in his Love.

'Tis enough, whatſoever they may be ſeparated from, the Things, or Perſons, deareſt in this World; it is no matter, the Jewel is ſafe, none can take my Chriſt from me, and I ſafe in him, as his Purchaſe, none can take me from him. And being ſtill in his Love, and through him in the Father's Love, that is ſufficient. What can I fear? What can I want? All other Hazards ſignify nothing: How little Value are they of? And for how little a while am I in Danger of them? Methinks all ſhould look on a Believer with an emulous Eye, and with his Eſtate more than a King's.

Alas! poor Creatures, rich Men, great Men, Princes and Kings, what vain Things are they that you embrace and cleave to; whatſoever they be, ſoon muſt you part; can you ſay of any of them, who ſhall ſeparate us? Storms may ariſe and ſcatter Ships that ſail fairly together in fair Weather: Thou mayeſt be removed, by publick Commotions and Calamities, from thy ſweet Dwellings, and Societies, and Eſtates, *&c.* You may even live to ſee, and ſeek your parting. At laſt you muſt part, for you muſt die: Then farewel Parks and Palaces, Gardens and Honours, and even Crowns themſelves; then deareſt Friends, Children and Wife muſt be parted with *. And what haſt thou left, poor Soul, that haſt not Chriſt, but that which thou wouldſt gladly part with and canſt not, The condemning Guilt of all thy Sins?

* *Linquenda tellus & domus & placens uxor*, &c.

But the Soul that is in Chriſt, when other Things are pulled away, he feels little or nothing, he cleaves to Chriſt, and theſe Separations pain him not. Yea, when that great Separatiſt, Death, comes, that breaks all other Unions, even that of the Soul and Body, yet ſo far is it from ſeparating the Believer's Soul from its beloved Lord Jeſus, that, on the contrary, it carries it into the neareſt Union with him, and fulleſt Enjoyment of him for ever.

SERMON XVIII.

ISAIAH LIX. 1, 2.

Behold, the Lord's Hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, neither his Ear heavy that it cannot hear.
But your Iniquities have ſeparated between you and your God, and your Sins have hid his Face from you, that he will not hear.

OUR vain Minds are naturally fruitful in nothing more than in Miſtakes of God; for the moſt part we think not on him, and when we do it, we fancy him according to our own Affections, which are wholly perverſe and crooked.

Men commonly judge it a vain Thing to ſpend much Pains and Time in worſhipping him; and if they are convinced in this, and tied to it by the Profeſſion of his Name, then they think all Religion is a Shell of external Diligences and Obſervances, and count it ſtrange if this be not accepted. In the former Chapter we find this, in the Prophet's Conteſt with the People about their Faſting, and their Opinion of it, he cuts up their Sacrifices, and lets them

them ſee what was within, the Skin was found and look'd well, but being opened, the Entrails were found rotten. And here he enters into another Conteſt, againſt the latent Atheiſm of their Hearts; who after their Manner of ſeeking God, not finding him, and not being delivered, are ready to think that he either cannot, or will not help, and rather reſt on that groſs Miſtake, than enquire into themſelves for the true Cauſe of their continuing Calamities; they incline rather to think it is ſome Indiſpoſition in God to help, than what it truly is, a Want of Reformation in themſelves that hinders it. It is not likely that they would ſay thus, nor ſpeak it out in plain Terms, no, nor poſſibly not ſpeak it formally and diſtinctly within, not ſo much as in their Thoughts, and yet they might have a confuſed dark Conceit of this. And much of the Atheiſm of Man's Heart is of this Faſhion; not formed into reſolved Propoſitions, but latent *, in confuſed Notions of it, ſcarce diſcernible by himſelf, at leaſt, not ſearched out and diſcerned in his own Breaſt; there they are, and he ſees them not: Not written Aſſertions, but flying Fumes, filling the Soul, and hindering it to read the Characters of God that are writ upon the Conſcience.

Impenitency of Men, in any Condition, and particularly under Diſtreſs, is from the Want of clear Apprehenſions and deep Perſuaſions of God, of his juſt Anger provoked by their Sin, and of his Sweetneſs and Readineſs to forgive and embrace a returning Sinner; his ſovereign Power, able to rid them out of the greateſt Trouble; his Ear quick enough to hear the Cries, yea, the leaſt whiſpering of a humbled Heart in the loweſt Deep of his Sorrow, and his Arm long enough to reach them, and ſtrong enough to draw them forth. *He that comes unto God*

* Ezek. viii. *Behind the Wall.*

muſt believe that he is, ſays the Apoſtle. So certainly he that *believes* that, muſt *come*; it will ſweetly conſtrain him, he cannot but come that is ſo perſuaded. Were Mens Hearts much impreſt with that Belief in all their Troubles, they would eye Men leſs, and God more, and without Delay they would faſten upon the Church's Reſolution, *Hoſ.* vi. 1. *Come and let us return unto the Lord; for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up*, &c. And this is the very thing that the Prophet would here perſuade to by this preſent Doctrine; and having impleaded them guilty, he ſets them a Copy of humble Confeſſion, *Ver.* 12. *&c.* Hence the frequent Complaints in the Pſalm, *Why hideſt thou thyſelf?* So *Pſal.* xxii. 2. *I cry*, but *no hearing.*

In the Words of theſe two Verſes, theſe two Things appear, *A ſad Condition*, and *the true Cauſe of it.*

The *Condition*, I think, I have Reaſon to call *ſad*; 'tis God hiding his Face that he will not hear. This may be the *perſonal* Eſtate of his *Children*, or the *publick* Eſtate of his *Church.* From a Soul he hides his Face, not ſo much in the withdrawing of ſenſible Comforts, and ſweet Taſtes of Joy, which to many are ſcarce known, and to ſuch as do know them, commonly do not continue very long, but it is a Suſpenſion of that lively Influence of his Divine Power, for raiſing the Mind to the Contemplation of him, and Communion with him in Prayer and Meditation, which yet may be, where thoſe Reliſhes and Senſes of Joy are not. And the Returns of it appear in beating down the Power of Sin, or abating and ſubduing it, making the Heart more pure and heavenly, more to live by Faith in Chriſt, to be often at the Throne of Grace, and to receive gracious Anſwers, Supplies of Wants, and Aſſiſtances againſt Temptations. Now when there is a Ceſſation and

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Obſtruction of theſe, and ſuch like Workings, the Face of God is *hid*, the Soul is at a Loſs, ſeeks ſtill and cannot find him whom it loveth. And in this Condition it cannot take Comfort in other Things, they are too low. 'Tis a higher and nobler Deſire than to be ſatisfied, or diverted, with the childiſh Things, that even Men delight in that know not God. 'Tis a Love Sickneſs, which nothing can cure but the Preſence and Love of the Party loved. Yea, nothing can ſo much as allay the Pain, and give an Interval of Eaſe, or recover a fainting Fit, but ſome good Work or Look, or at leaſt ſome kind Meſſage from him. Set thee in a Palace, and all Delights about thee, and a Crown on thy Head, yet if his Love has ceaſed on thy Heart, theſe are all nothing without him. It was after *David* was advanced to his Kingdom, and is in the *Pſalm* of the Dedication of his Royal Houſe, that he ſaid, *Thou hideſt thy Face, and I was troubled*, Pſal. xxx. "All "is dark, all the ſhining Marble, and the Gold and "Azure, loſe their Luſtre, when thou art not here "dwelling with me."

And thus for the Church, God is the proper Light, the Beauty, the Life of it. Deck it with all this World's Splendor, with all the Dreſſes of pompous Worſhip, theſe are not its genuine Beauty. And they provoke him, who is its *Ornament*, (as is *Jer.* ii. 32.) to depart. But give it the native Purity and Beauty of holy Miniſters, and Ordinances well regulated, yet even that is but a dead Comelineſs, Proportion, and Feature, without Life, when God is abſent.

And for Matter of Deliverances and Working for her, which is here the thing in Hand, none can do any thing in that, not the wiſeſt, nor the beſt of Men, with all their combined Wit and Strength, when he retires and comes not forth, doth not ſhew himſelf

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on the Behalf of his People, and work their Works for them.

Theſe have, it may be, ſome kind of Prayer poſſibly, they offer at Extraordinaries, and yet obtain nothing, are not heard, the ſaddeſt Note in all the Song of *Lament.* iii. 43, 44. *Thou haſt covered with Anger, and perſecuted us; thou haſt ſlain, thou haſt not pitied. Thou haſt covered thyſelf with a Cloud,* that our Prayer ſhould not paſs through. Still, while that Door ſtands open, there is Hope and Remedy for other Evils, but that being ſhut, what can a People, or a Soul expect, but growing Troubles, one Sorrow upon the back of another; yea, that is the great Trouble, the *hiding* of his Face, and refuſing to hear. Obſerve *Job* xxxiv. 29. *When he giveth Peace, who then can make Trouble?* Now the other in the ſame Terms would have been, *when he makes Trouble, who can give Peace?* But inſtead 'tis, *when he hides his Face, who then can behold him?* No Peace but in beholding him, and nothing but Trouble; *that* is the grand Trouble when he *hides* his Face, and it is expreſſed in both Caſes, whether it be perſonal or national, *whether againſt a Nation or a Man only.*

This is the thing wherein the Strength of other Troubles ly, that gives them Weight, when they impart and ſignify thus much, that the Face of God is hid from a Soul or a People.

We ought to enquire if this be not our Condition at this time, hath he not hid his Face from us? Are we not left in the Dark, that we know not which Way to turn us? Either we muſt ſit ſtill and do nothing, for if we ſtir we do but ruſh one upon another, as in Darkneſs, conteſting each to have the Way, and yet when we have it given us, we know not well which Way to go. And we think to be cleared, but it fails us, as in this Chapter, *Ver.* 9. *We wait for Light but behold Obſcurity, for Brightneſs,*

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but we walk in Darkneſs, we grope for the Wall as blind, and ſtumble at Noon-day as in the Night, our Counſels ſtrangely darkened, and no right underſtanding one of another. By all Debates little or no clearing of things attained, but our Paſſions are more enflamed, and Parties are further off, the Light of ſound Judgment gone, and with it the Heat of Love, inſtead of which that miſerable infernal Heat, Heat without Light, mutual Hatreds and Revilings, both Sides (verbally at leaſt) agreeing in the general Terms both of their Deſires and Deſigns, and yet falling out about Modes and Faſhions of them. And to ſay no more of Parties, the Enemies of Religion on both Hands, Right and Left, in Action and in Power, and only thoſe that love that, we conceive is the Way of Truth, ſtanding as a naked Prey to whether of the two ſhall prevail. Deſires and Prayers we have preſented, and ſee as yet no Appearance of an Iſſue, but further Confuſions, even faſting to Striſe and Debate. And where are there any that look like Perſons to ſtand in the Gap, lifting up holy Hands, without Wrath or Doubting? Hearts are ſtill as unhumbled, and Lives as unreformed as ever, new inteſtine Troubles are moſt likely to ariſe, few or none laying it to Heart, and with calm lowly Spirits mourning before God for it, Ephraim *againſt* Manaſſeh, *and* Manaſſeh *againſt* Ephraim, *and they both againſt* Judah, *and for all this his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is ſtretched out ſtill.*

But generally Men ought to be leſs in deſcanting one on another, and more in ſearching and enquiring each into himſelf, even where it may ſeem Zeal, yet Nature and Paſſion may more eaſily let in the other, but this Self-ſearch and Self-cenſure, is an uneaſy Task, the moſt unpleaſant of all things to our carnal ſelf-loving Hearts; but the heavy Hand of

God

God ſhall never turn from us, nor his gracious Face turn towards us, till there is more of this amongſt us. Moſt ſay their Prayers, and as they are little worth, they look little after them, enquire not what becomes of them. But, my Brethren, would we continue to call, and find favourable Anſwers, we muſt be more within, the Heart made a Temple to God, wherein Sacrifices do aſcend; but that they may be accepted, it muſt be purged of Idols, nothing left in any Corner, though never ſo ſecret, to ſtir the Jealouſy of our God, who ſees through all. O happy that Heart, that is, as *Jacob*'s Houſe, purged, in which no more Idols are to be found, but the Holy God dwelling there alone as in his Holy Temple.

Behold, the Lord's Hand is not ſhortned, &c.] Much of all Knowledge lies in the Knowledge of Cauſes, and in practical things much of the right ordering them depends on it; the true Cauſe of a Diſeaſe found out is half the Cure. Here we have the Miſeries of an afflicted People reduced to their real Cauſe; that which is not the Cauſe is firſt removed. *Behold the Lord's Hand is not ſhortned*, &c.

We are not only to be untaught this Error that we think not ſo, but to be taught to believe and think on that Truth, that God is ſtill the ſame in Power and Goodneſs, to keep up the Notion of it in our Hearts, ſo we may call in paſt Experiences, and Relations of God's former workings for his People, and that with much Uſe and Comfort. He that brought forth his People out of *Egypt* with an outſtretched Arm, as ſtill they are reminded of that Deliverance by the Prophets, and called to look on it, as the great Inſtance and Pledge of their Reſtorement by the ſame Hand, can again deliver his People when at the loweſt, *Iſa.* l. 2. where the like Words to theſe.

And in this Belief we ſhall not faint in the time of deep Diſtreſs, our own, or the Church's; knowing

ing the unalterable, invincible, infinite Power of our God, that all the Strength of all Enemies is nothing, and leſs than nothing to his, their Devices Knots of Straw. What is it that is to be done for his Church, if her and his Glory be intereſted in it? There remains no Queſtion in point of Difficulty, that hath no Place with him. The more difficult, yea impoſſible for us, or any human Strength, the more fit Work for him; *becauſe it is hard for you, ſhall it alſo be hard for me?* ſaith the Lord in the Prophet. And where *Jeremy* uſes that Argument in Prayer, he hath his Anſwer returned in the ſame Words, as the Echo to the Prayer, reſounding from Heaven, *Jer.* xxxii. 17. 27. and that in relation to the great Reduction of the *Jews* from *Babylon*, as is expreſly promiſed, *Ver.* 36, 37, *&c.* And there the Prophet gives that firſt great Example of divine Power, the forming of the World, *Ver.* 17. *Behold thou haſt made the Heaven and the Earth by thy great Power.*

Men think 'tis an eaſy common Belief, and that none doubt of the Omnipotency of God. But oh! the undaunted Confidence it would give to the Heart, being indeed firmly believed, and wiſely uſed and applied to particular Exigencies. Men either doubt, or which, upon the Matter, for the uſe of it is all one, they forget who the Lord is, when their Hearts miſgive them, becauſe of the Church's Weakneſs, and the Enemies Power. What is that upon the Matter? Remember whoſe is the Church, God's, and what his Power is, and then ſee if thou canſt find any Cauſe of Fear, *Iſa.* xli. 14. *Fear not, thou Worm* Jacob, and ye *Men few*, or *weak Men of* Iſrael, (ſo the Word is) *I will help thee, ſaith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy one of* Iſrael. So *Iſa.* li. 12. *I, even I am he, that comforteth you*, (there is the Strength of it) *who art thou, that thou ſhouldſt be afraid of a Man that ſhall dy, and of the Son of Man, which ſhall*

be made as Graſs? And forgetteſt, (Ver. 13.) *the Lord thy Maker that ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth.* &c. Do but think aright on him, and then ſee if it be *poſſible* for thee to fear. All thy little Doubts and Deſpondencies of Mind will fly and vaniſh away before one clear Thought of thy God. Though the World were turning upſide down, it ſhall go well with them that fear him.

And as this Apprehenſion of God ſtrengthens Faith, ſo it quickens Prayer, it ſtirs thee up to ſeek to him for Help, when thou knoweſt and remembreſt that there it is. There is Help in him, Power enough, and no want of Readineſs and good Will neither. If we apply ourſelves to ſeek him aright, his Hand is as ſtrong to ſave, and his Ear as quick to hear as ever. And in this that *his Ear is not heavy*, is both ſignified his ſpeedy and certain Knowledge of all Requeſts ſent up to him, and his gracious Inclination to receive them. Now theſe Perſuaſions do undoubtedly draw up the Heart towards him.

Again, as they ſtrengthen Faith and quicken Prayer, they teach us Repentance, direct us inward to Self-examination, to the ſearching, and finding out and purging out of Sin, when Deliverance is delayed; for we are ſure it ſtops not upon either of theſe on God's Part, either Shortneſs of his Hand, or Dulneſs of his Ear. Whence is it then? Certainly it muſt be ſomewhat on our Side that works againſt us, and prejudices our Deſires. So here, thus you ſee the clear Aim of it, *Behold the Lord's Hand is not ſhortned that it cannot ſave, nor his Ear heavy that it cannot hear:* What is it then that hinders? Oh! it is this, out of all doubt, *Your Iniquities ſeparate.*

Old Sins unrepented of, and new Sins ſtill added, as all unrepentant Sinners do; now this ſeparates between you and God, for he is a holy God, a juſt God,

God, hates Iniquity, and *between you and your God*, that pleads no Connivance at your Sins, but rather nearer Inſpection, and ſharper Puniſhment, *he will be ſanctified in theſe that are near him*, in *them* eſpecially; their Sin is greatned much by that Relation, *your God*, to ſin againſt him ſo groſly, ſo continuedly, with ſo high a Hand, and ſo impenitent Hearts, not reclaimed by all his Mercies, by the Remembrance of his Covenant made with you, and Mercies beſtowed on you, nor by the Fear of his Judgments threatned, nor by the Feeling of them inflicted, no returning nor relenting, not of his own People to their God. Sure, you muſt be yet more puniſhed. *You only have I known of all the Families of the Earth, therefore will I puniſh you for all your Iniquities.* "I "let others eſcape with many things that I cannot "paſs in you; you faſt and pray it may be, you "howl and keep a Noiſe, but you amend nothing, "forſake not one Sin, for all your Sufferings, and "for all your Moanings and Cries; you would be "delivered, but do not part with one of your Luſts, "or wicked Cuſtoms, even for a Deliverance, and "ſo the Quarrel remains ſtill. 'Tis that that ſepa-"rates, is as a huge Wall betwixt us, betwixt me "and your Prayers, and betwixt you and my help-"ing Hand, and though I do hear and could help, "yet I will not, till this Wall be down; you ſhall "not ſee me, nor find by any gracious *Sign* that I "hear you." This hides his Face that he will not hear.

This Way God hath eſtabliſhed in his ordinary Methods with his People, though ſometimes he uſes his own Privilege, yet uſually he links *Sin* and *Calamity* together, and *Repentance* and *Deliverance* together.

Sin ſeparates and hides his Face, not only from a People that profeſſes his Name, but even from a Soul

that really bears his Name ſtamped upon it. Tho' it cannot fully, and for ever cut off ſuch a Soul, yet in part, and for a time it may, yea to be ſure, it will ſeparate, and hide the Face of God from them. Their daily inevitable Frailties do not this, but either a Courſe of careleſs walking, and many little unlawful Liberties taken to themſelves, that will riſe and gather as a Cloud, and hide the Face of God. Or ſome one groſs Sin, eſpecially if often reiterated, will prove as a firm Stone-wall, or rather as a Brazen-wall, built up by their own Hands betwixt them and Heaven, and will not be ſo eaſily diſſolved or broke down; and yet till that be, the Light of his Countenance, who is the Life of the Soul, will be eclipſed, and withheld from it.

And this conſidered, (beſides that Law of Love that will forbid ſo foul Ingratitude, yet I ſay, this conſidered, even our own Intereſt) will make us wary to Sin: Though we were ſure not to be yet altogether ſeparated from the Love of God by it; yet thou that haſt any Perſuaſion of that Love, dareſt thou venture upon any known Sin? Thou art not hazardleſs and free from all Damage by it, if thou haſt need of that Argument to reſtrain thee. Then before thou run upon it, ſit down and reckon the Expence, ſee what it will coſt thee if thou do commit it. Thou knoweſt that once it coſt the Heart-blood of thy Redeemer to expiate it, and is it a light Matter to thee? And though that paid all that Score, nothing thou canſt ſuffer being able to do any thing that way, yet as an unavoidable preſent Fruit of it, it will draw on this Damage, " thou ſhalt be ſure " for a time, it may be for a long time, poſſibly " moſt of thy time, near all thy Days it may dar- " ken much that Love of God to thee," which if thou doeſt but eſteem of, think on it, it changes not in him, but a ſad change will Sin bring on thee, as

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to thy Sight and Apprehenſion of it; many a ſweet Hour of bleſt Communion with thy God ſhalt thou miſs, and either be dead, and ſtupid in that Want, and mourn after him, and yet find thyſelf, and Sighs, and Tears hold out, the Door ſhut, yea, a dead Wall raiſed betwixt thee and him, and at beſt much Straitning and Pains to take it down again; contrary to other Walls and Buildings, that are far more eaſily pull'd down than built up, but this a great deal eaſier built up than pull'd down. True, thy God could caſt it down with a Word, and it is his free Grace that muſt do it, otherwiſe thou couldſt never remove it, yet will he have thee feel thy own Handy-work, and know thy Folly. Thou muſt be at Pains to dig at it, and may be coſt thee broken Bones in taking it down, Pieces of it falling heavy and ſad upon thy Conſcience, and cruſhing thee, as *David* cried out at that Work, *Pſal.* li. for a healing Word from God, *Make me to hear Joy and Gladneſs, that the Bones which thou haſt broken may rejoice.* It will force thee to ſay, "O Fool that I was, what "meant I? Oh! it is good keeping near God, and "raiſing no Diviſions. What are Sins? Falſe De-"lights, but make ado, and have ado, a Man to "provide his own Vexation." Now this Diſtance from God, and all this turmoiling, and breaking, and crying e're he appear again, conſider, if any Pleaſure of Sin can countervail this Damage, ſure, when thou art not out of thy Wits, thou wilt never make ſuch a Bargain for all the Pleaſure thou muſt make out of any Sin, to breed thyſelf all this Pains, and all this Grief, at once, to diſpleaſe thy God, and diſpleaſe thyſelf, and make a Partition between him and thee. Oh! ſweet and ſafe Ways of Holineſs, walking with God in his Company and Favour; he *that orders his Converſation aright, he ſees the loving Kind-*

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neſs of the Lord, it is ſhewn to him, he lives in the Sight of it.

But if any ſuch Separation is made, yet, is it thy great Deſire to have it removed? Why then there is Hope. See to it, labour to break down, and pray to him to help thee, and he will put to his Hand, and then it muſt fall, and in all thy Senſe of Separation, look to him that *brake down the middle Wall*, Eph. ii. There it is ſpoken of, as betwixt Men, *Jews* and *Gentiles*, but ſo as it was alſo between the *Gentiles* and God, ſeparated from his People, and from himſelf, *Ver.* 16. to *reconcile both to God in one Body*, and *Ver.* 18. *Through him we have Acceſs by one Spirit to the Father*, and then he adds, that they were *no more Strangers and Foreigners*, dwelling on the other Side of the Wall, παροίκοι, as the Word is, *but fellow Citizens*, &c.

Oh! that we knew more what it were to live in this ſweet Society, in undivided Fellowſhip with God. Alas! how little is underſtood this living in him, ſeparated from Sin and this World, which otherwiſe do ſeparate from him; ſolacing our Hearts in his Love, and deſpiſing the baſe muddy Delights that the World admires; hoping for that new *Jeruſalem*, where none of theſe Walls of Sin, nor any one Stone of them are, and for that bright Day wherein there is no Cloud nor Miſt to hide our Sun from us.

Now for the Condition of the Church, know Sin to be the great Obſtructer of its Peace, making him to withdraw his Hand, and hide his Face, and to turn away his Ear from our Prayers, and loath our Faſts, *Iſa.* i. 15. *Jer.* xiv. 12. The Quarrel ſtands, Sin not repented and removed, the Wall is ſtill ſtanding; Oaths, and Sabbath-breaking, and Pride, and Oppreſſion, and Heart-burnings ſtill remaining. Oh! what a Noiſe of Religion and Reformation,

formation, all Sides are for the Name of it, and how little of the Thing? The Goſpel itſelf is deſpiſed, grown ſtale, as trivial Doctrine. Oh! my Beloved, if I could ſpeak many Hours without Intermiſſion, all my Cry would be, *Repent and pray. Let us ſearch and try our Ways, and turn unto the Lord our God.* Oh! what Walls of every one's Sin are ſet to it! Dig diligently to bring down thine own; and for theſe huge Walls of publick National Guiltineſſes, if thou canſt do nothing to them more, compaſs them about as *Jericho*, and look up to Heaven for their Downfal. Cry, " Lord, theſe we ourſelves " have reared, but without thee who can bring " them down? Lord, throw them down for us; a " Touch of thy Hand, a Word of thy Mouth, will " make them fall." Were we leſs buſied in Impertinencies, and more in this moſt needful Work, it might do ſome Good; who knows but the Lord might make his own Way clear, and return and viſit us, and make his Face to ſhine, that we might be ſaved.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE CREED.

1 Tim. III. 9.

Holding the Myſtery of Faith in a pure Conſcience.

THAT which was the Apoſtle's Practice, as he expreſſes it, 1 *Cor.* ix. 22. is the ſtanding Duty of all the Miniſters of the ſame Goſpel: *To the weak to become as weak, to gain the weak; and all Things to all Men, that if by any means they may ſave ſome.* And truly one main Part of Obſervance of that Rule, is in deſcending to the Inſtruction of the moſt ignorant in the Principles of Chriſtian Religion. That I aim at, at this Time, is a very brief and plain Expoſition of the Articles of our Faith, as we have them in that ſummary Confeſſion. Not ſtaying you at all on the Antiquity and Authority of it, both which are confeſt; whether it was pen'd by the Apoſtles, or by others in their Time, or ſoon after it, it doth very clearly and briefly contain the Main of their divine Doctrine.

But though it be altogether conſonant with the Scriptures, yet not being a Part of the Canon of them, I chuſe theſe Words as pertinent to our intended Explication of it: They are indeed here, as they ſtand in the Context, a Rule for Deacons; but with-

out queſtion, taken in general, they expreſs the great Duty of all that are Chriſtians, *to keep the Myſtery of Faith*, &c.

You ſee clearly in them a rich Jewel, and a precious Cabinet fit for it; the Myſtery of Faith laid up, and kept in a pure Conſcience. And theſe two are not only ſuitable, but inſeparable, as we ſee in the firſt Chapter of this Epiſtle, *Ver.* 10. they are preſerv'd and loſt together, they ſuffer the ſame Shipwreck: The caſting away of the one is the Shipwreck of the other; if the one periſh, the other cannot eſcape. Every Believer is the Temple of God; and as the Tables of the Law were kept in the Ark, this pure Conſcience is the Ark that holds the Myſtery of Faith. You think you are Believers, you do not queſtion that, and would take it ill that others ſhould; it is very hard to convince Men of Unbelief, directly and in itſelf: But if you do believe this Truth, that the only Receptacle of ſaving Faith is a purified Conſcience, then I beſeech you, queſtion yourſelves concerning that; being truly anſwered in it, it will reſolve you touching your Faith, which you are ſo loth to queſtion in itſelf. Are your Conſciences pure? Have you a living Hatred and Antipathy againſt all Impurity? Then ſure Faith is there; for it is the peculiar Virtue of Faith to purify the Heart, *Acts* xv. and the Heart ſo purified is the proper Reſidence of Faith, where it dwells and reſts as in its natural Place. But have you Conſciences that can lodge Pride, and Luſt, and Malice, and Covetouſneſs, and ſuch like Pollutions? Then be no more ſo impudent as to ſay, you believe, nor deceive yourſelves ſo far as to think you do. The Blood of Chriſt never ſpeaks Peace to any Conſcience, but the ſame that it purifies *from dead Works to ſerve the living God*, Heb. ix. 13, 14. As that Blood is a Sacrifice to appeaſe God's Wrath, ſo it is a Laver to

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waſh our Souls, and to ſerve both Ends; it is, as was the Blood of legal Sacrifices, both offered up to God and ſprinkled upon us, as both are expreſt in the Apoſtle's Words there. Do not think that God will throw this Jewel of Faith into a Sty or Kennel, a Conſcience full of Defilement and Uncleanneſs. Therefore if you have any Mind to theſe Comforts and Peace, that Faith brings along with it, be careful to lodge it where it delights to dwell, in a pure Conſcience. Notwithſtanding the unbelieving World mocks the Name of *Purity*; yet ſtudy you above all, that Purity and Holineſs that may make your Souls a fit Abode for *Faith*, and that Peace which it worketh, and that Holy Spirit that works both in you.

Faith is either the Doctrine which we believe, or that Grace by which we believe that Doctrine: Here I conceive it is both met and united in the Soul, as they ſay of the Underſtanding in the Schools, *Intelligendo fit illud quod intelligit*; ſo Faith apprehending its proper Object, is made one with it. Faith is kept in a pure Conſcience, that is, both that pure Doctrine of the Goſpel which Faith receives, and that Faith which receives it, are together fitly placed and preſerved, when they are laid up in a pure Conſcience. The Doctrine of Faith cannot be receiv'd into nor laid up in the Soul, but by that Faith that believes it, and that Faith hath no Being without believing that Doctrine; and both are fitly called the *Myſtery of Faith*. The Doctrine is myſterious, and it is a myſterious Work to beget Faith in the Heart to receive it: For the Things we muſt believe are very high and heavenly, and our Hearts are earthly and baſe till the Spirit renew them. In our Confeſſion of Faith we have both expreſt; the firſt Word is a Profeſſion of Faith, which receives the Doctrine as true, *I believe*, and the Articles themſelves contain the Sum of the Doctrine believed:

And if we that profeſs this Faith have within us pure Conſciences, wherein the Myſtery of Faith, the Doctrine of Faith believ'd, and the Grace of Faith believing it, both together as one, may reſide, dwell, and be preſerv'd; then is the Text compleatly anſwer'd in the preſent Subject.

Remember then, ſince we profeſs this Faith, Which is the proper Seat of Faith? Not our Books, our Tongues only, or Memories, or Judgment, but our Conſcience; and not our natural Conſcience defil'd and ſtuff'd with Sin, but renewed and ſanctified by Grace, *holding the Myſtery of Faith in a pure Conſcience.*

I believe in God the Father.]

Not to inſiſt here on the Nature of Faith, taking it as comprehenſively as we can, it is no other but a ſupernatural Belief of God, and Confidence in him. Whether we call God, or the Word of God, the Object of Faith, there is no material Difference, for it is God in the Word, as reveal'd by the Word, that is that Object. God is that *veritas incomplexa* (as they ſpeak) that Faith embraces; and the Word, the *veritas complexa*, that contains what we are to conceive of God, and believe concerning him. As, in the Goſpel, the peculiar Object of that Faith that ſaves fallen Man, it is all one, whether we ſay it is Chriſt, or the Promiſes: For it is Chriſt revealed and held forth in the Promiſes that Faith lays hold on; *In him are all the Promiſes of God Yea, and in him Amen.* So that it is all one Act of Faith that lays hold on Chriſt, and on the Promiſes, for they are all one, he is in them; and therefore Faith reſts on them, becauſe they include Chriſt who is our Reſt and our Peace, as a Man at once receives a Ring and the precious Stone that is ſet in it. This once rightly underſtood, any further Diſpute about placing Faith in the Underſtanding or the Will, is poſ-

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ſibly in itſelf not at all needful, ſure I am it is no way uſeful for you. Take heed of carnal profane Preſumption, for that will undo you; and labour to be ſure of ſuch a Faith as dwells in a pure Conſcience, and it will be ſure not to deceive you.

That Confidence which this Expreſſion bears, believing in God, ſuppoſes certainly (as all agree) a right Belief concerning God, both that he is, and what he is, according as the Word reveals him, eſpecially what he is relating to us; theſe three we have together, *Heb.* xi. 6. *He that cometh to God muſt believe that God is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently ſeek him.* 1. That he is. 2. To truſt his Word, believing that he is true to his Promiſes, a Rewarder of them that ſeek him. 3. Upon theſe follows coming to him, which is this, believing in that God that the Pſalm ſpeaks of, that Reliance and Reſting of the Soul upon him that reſults from that right Belief concerning him, and truſting the Teſtimony of his Word, as it reveals him.

We have diſcourſed of the Attributes of God elſewhere, as alſo of the Trinity, which is here expreſſed in theſe Words; *I believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt.* That ſublime Myſtery is to be cautiouſly treated of, and rather humbly to be admired, than curiouſly dived into. The Day will come (truly *a Day*, for here we are beſet with the gloomy nightly Shades of Ignorance) wherein we ſhall ſee him as he is. In the mean time let us devoutly worſhip him, as he has revealed himſelf to us; for this is the true Way to that heavenly Country, where we ſhall ſee him face to face. And it is our Intereſt here to believe the Trinity of Perſons in the Unity of the Godhead, and to truſt in them as ſuch, for this is the Spring of all our Hope, that the middle of the three became our Mediator, and the Holy Spirit our Guide and Teacher, and the Father re-

reconciles us to himſelf by the Son, and renews us by the Spirit.

Father.] Firſt the Father of his only begotten Son Chriſt, and through him our Father by the Grace of Adoption. And ſo Chriſt does clearly inſinuate the Order of our Filiation, *I aſcend to my Father, and your Father, my God and your God.* He ſays, not to our Father, but to my Father and your Father, firſt mine, and then yours through me.

Almighty.] This alſo belongs to the Attributes of God, ſo we ſhall be but ſhort on it here.

[*Almighty*, able in himſelf to do all things, and the Source of all Power in others, all the Power in the Creature being derived from him; ſo that it cannot altogether equal his, nor reſiſt him, no, nor at all be without him. Whoſoever they be that boaſt moſt in their own Strength in any Kind, and ſwell higheſt in Conceit of it, are yet but as a brittle Glaſs in the Hand of God; he cannot only break it to Pieces by the Strength of his Hand, but if he do but withdraw his Hand from ſupporting it, it will fall and break of itſelf.

Maker of Heaven and Earth.] The Son and the Spirit were, with the Father, Authors of the Creation; but it is aſcribed to the Father particularly, in regard of the Order and Manner of their working. Whether natural Reaſon may evince the Creation of the World, we will not diſpute; we know that he that had very much of that, and is the great Maſter of it in the Schools, could not ſee it by that Light; yet there is enough in Reaſon to anſwer all the falſe Cavils of profane Men, and very much to juſtify the Truth of this we believe. However we muſt endeavour to believe it by divine Faith, according to that of the Apoſtle, *By Faith we believe that the Worlds were framed by the Word of God.* And this is the firſt Article we meet withal in the Scriptures,

and

and our Faith is put to it in a very high Point in the very Entrance.

In the Beginning God made the Heaven and the Earth, ſpeaking like himſelf; it is not proved by Demonſtrations nor any kind of Arguments, but aſſerted by the Authority of God: And with that which begins the Books of the Law, *John* begins his Goſpel; that upon his Word, that by his Word made the World, we may believe that he did ſo.

This is fitly added to the Title of Almighty as a Work of Almighty Power, and therefore a clear Teſtimony of it, and both together will ſuit with our Profeſſion of believing in him; for this is a main Support of our Faith, to be perſuaded of his Power on whom we truſt. *Our God is able to deliver us* (ſaid they,) and *Abraham*, the Apoſtle ſays, *he offered up his Son, accounting*, or reaſoning with himſelf, or laying his reckoning, *that God was able to raiſe him from the dead.*

We make more bold to ſpeak out our own queſtioning the Love and good Will of God, becauſe we think we have ſome Reaſon in that from our own Unworthineſs, but if we would ſound our own Hearts, we would often find in our Diſtruſts ſome ſecret Doubtings of God's Power. *Can God prepare a Table in the Wilderneſs?* ſaid they, though accuſtom'd to Miracles, yet ſtill unbelieving. We think we are ſtrongly enough perſwaded of this, but our Hearts deceive us, *quæ ſcimus cùm neceſſe non eſt, ea in neceſſitate neſcimus*, S. Bern. The Heart is deceitful, *Gen.* xvii. 9. where he is ſpeaking of truſting. It is not for nothing that God by his Prophets ſo often inculcates this Doctrine of his Power, and this great Inſtance of it, the Creation, when he promiſes great Deliverances to his Church, and the Deſtruction of their Enemies, *Iſa.* xlv. 12 and li. 12. What can be too hard for him, that found it not too hard

to

to make a World of nothing? If thou look on the Publick, the Enemies of the Church are ſtrong; if on thyſelf, thou haſt indeed ſtrong Corruptions within, and ſtrong Temptations without; yet none of theſe are almighty, as thy God is. What is it thou would have done, that he cannot do if he think fit? And if he think it not fit, if thou art one of his Children thou wilt think with him, thou wilt reverence his Wiſdom, and reſt ſatisfied with his Will. This is believing indeed; the rolling all our Deſires and Burdens over upon an almighty God; and where this is, it cannot chuſe but eſtabliſh the Heart in the midſt of Troubles, and give it a Calm within in the midſt of the greateſt Storms.

And try what other Confidences you will, they ſhall prove vain and lying in the Day of Trouble; he that thinks to quiet his Mind, and find Reſt by worldly Comfort, is, as *Solomon* compares his Drunkard, *as one that lies down in the midſt of the Sea*, that ſleepeth on the Top of a Maſt; he can have but unſettled Reſt and Repoſe that lies there, *but he that truſteth in the Lord, is as Mount Sion that cannot be removed.* When we lean upon other Props beſides God, they prove broken Reeds that not only fail, but pierce the Hand that leans on them, *Jer* xvii. 7.

There is yet another thing in this Article, that ſerves farther to uphold our Faith, that of Neceſſity he that made the World by his Power, doth likewiſe rule it by his Providence. It is ſo great a Fabrick, as cannot be upheld and governed by any leſs Power, than that which made it. He did not frame this World as the Carpenter his Ship, to put it into other Hands and look no more after it; but as he made it, he is the continual Pilot of it, ſits ſtill at the Helm and guides it, yea he commands the Winds and Seas, and they obey him. And this ſerves much

for

for the Comfort of the Godly, but I cannot here inſiſt on it.

And in Jeſus Chriſt.]

The two great Works of God by which he is known to us, are Creation, and Redemption which is a new or ſecond Creation. The Son of God, as God, was with the Father, as the Worker of the former, but as God Man, he is the Author of the latter. St. *John* begins his Goſpel with the firſt, and from that paſſes on to the ſecond. *In the Beginning was the Word*, &c. *Ver.* 1. *By him were all things made.* But *Ver.* 14. the other is expreſt, *The Word was made Fleſh, and he dwelt among us*, Had a Tent like ours, and made of the ſame Materials. He adds, *He was full of Grace and Truth*, and for that End, as there follows, *that we might all receive of his Fulneſs, Grace for Grace.* And this is that great Work of new Creation; therefore the Prophet *Iſaiah* Chap. li. 16. foretelling this great Work from the Lord's own Mouth, ſpeaks of it in theſe Terms, *That I may plant the Heavens, and lay the Foundation of the Earth, and ſay unto Sion, thou art my People.* That making of a new People to himſelf in Chriſt, is as the framing of Heaven and Earth. Now this Reſtorement by Jeſus Chriſt, ſuppoſes the Ruin and Miſery of Man by his Fall, that Sin and Death under which he is born. This we all ſeem to know and acknowledge, and well we may, for we daily feel the woful Fruits of that bitter Root; but the Truth is, the greateſt Part of us are not fully convinced, and therefore do not conſider of this Gulf of Wretchedneſs into which we are fallen. If we were, there would be more Cries amongſt us for Help to be drawn out and delivered from it; this great Deliverer, this Saviour would be of more Uſe, and of more Eſteem with us. But I cannot now inſiſt on that Point.

Ἐσκήνωσεν.

Only conſider that this makes the Neceſſity of a Mediator. The Diſunion and Diſtance, that Sin hath made betwixt God and Man, cannot be made up but by a Mediator, one to come betwixt; ſo that there is now no believing in God the Father, but by this believing in Jeſus his Son, no appearing without Horrour, yea without Perdition before ſo juſt a Judge highly offended, but by the Intervention of ſo powerful a Reconciler, able to ſatisfy and appeaſe him, and he tells it us plainly and graciouſly, that we miſtake not our Way, *No Man comes unto the Father but by me.*

Few are our Thoughts concerning God, and returning to him, but if we have any, this is our Unhappineſs that naturally we are ſubject to leave out Chriſt in them.

We think there is ſomething to be done, we talk of Repentances, and Prayers, and Amendments, though we have not theſe neither; but if we had theſe, there is yet one thing neceſſary above all theſe, that we forget, there is abſolute need of a Mediator to make our Peace, and reduce us into Favour with God, one that muſt for that End do and ſuffer for us, what we can neither do nor ſuffer; though we could ſhed Rivers of Tears, they cannot waſh out the Stain of any one Sin; yea there is ſome Pollution in our very Tears; ſo that they themſelves have need to be waſhed in the Blood of Jeſus Chriſt.

Jeſus Chriſt.] Our anointed Saviour, anointed to be our King, our great High Prieſt, and our Prophet, and in all thoſe our Saviour; our Prophet to teach us the Way of Salvation; our Prieſt to purchaſe it for us; and our King to lead and protect us in the Way, and to bring us ſafe to the End of it. Thus is his Name full of Sweetneſs and Comfort, *mel in ore, in aure melos, in corde medicina*, as *Bernard* ſpeaks. It is a rich Ointment, and in the preaching

of

of the Goſpel *an Ointment poured forth*, diffuſing its fragrant Smell, for which the Virgins, the chaſte purified Souls of Believers love him, ſuch as have their Senſes exerciſed, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks, their ſpiritual ſmelling not obſtructed with the Pollutions of the World, but quick and open to receive and be refreſhed with the Smell of this precious Name of Jeſus Chriſt.

His only Son.] Other Sons he hath, Angels and Men by Creation and Adoption, but this his only begotten Son as God, by eternal and ineffable Generation, and as Man peculiarly the Son of God, both in regard of his ſingular unexampled Conception by the Holy Ghoſt, and by that perſonal Union with the Deity, which accompanied that Conception, and by that Fulneſs of all Grace which flowed from that Union. The unfolding of theſe would require a long time, and after all, more would remain unſaid and unconceived by us; for *his Generation who can declare?*

Let us remember this, that our Sonſhip is the Product of his, *Joh.* i. 14. *He is the only begotten Son of God*, and yet, *Ver.* 12. *To as many as received him he gave this Privilege to be the Sons of God.*

Our Lord.] Both by our loyal Subjection to him, and our peculiar Intereſt in him, theſe go together; willing Subjection and Obedience to his Laws is an inſeparable Companion, and therefore a certain Evidence of our Intereſt in his Grace.

Conceived by the Holy Ghoſt.]

This is that great Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſted in the Fleſh; the King of Glory after a manner diveſting himſelf of his Royal Robes, and truly putting on the Form of a Servant, the Holy Ghoſt framing him a Body in the Virgin's Womb; not that it was impoſſible to have made his human Nature ſinleſs in the ordinary way (though the Schools uſually

give that Reaſon) but that by that miraculous and peculiar Manner of Birth, he might be declared more than Man, as being a Way more congruous both to the Greatneſs of his Perſon, and the Purity of his human Nature.

Born of the Virgin Mary.]

He was not only of the ſame Nature with Man, which he might have been by a new created Humanity, but of the ſame Stock, and ſo a fit Saviour, a near *Kinſman*, as the Word, that in *Hebrew* is a *Redeemer*, doth ſignify Bone of our Bone, and Fleſh of our Fleſh. We ſee then the Perſon of our Mediator very fit for that his Office, having both the Natures of the Parties at Variance which he was to reconcile. And this happy Meeting of *God* and *Man* in the Perſon of Chriſt, to look no further, was a very great Step to the Agreement, and a ſtrong Pledge of its Accompliſhment. To ſee the Nature of Man that was an Enemy, received into ſo cloſe Embraces with the Deity, as within the Compaſs of one Perſon, promiſed infallibly a Reconcilement of the Perſons of Men unto God. There the Treaty of Peace began, and was exceedingly promoted by that very Beginning, ſo that in it, there was a ſure Preſage of the Succeſs, it was indeed as they ſay of a good Beginning, *Dimidium facti.* Had God and Man treated any where but in the Perſon of Chriſt, a Peace had never been concluded, yea it had broke up at firſt; but being in him, it could not fail, for in him they were already one, one Perſon, ſo there they could not but agree, *God was in Chriſt reconciling the World to himſelf.*

2. Conſidering the Work to be done in this Agreement, as well as the Perſons to be agreed; it was altogether needful that the Undertaker ſhould be God and Man *; the Mediation was not a bare Matter of Word,

* *Humana divinitas & divina humanitas.*

Word, but there was ſuch a Wrong done as required a Satisfaction ſhould be made, (we ſpeak not what God might abſolutely have done, but what was to be done ſuitable to God's End, that was for the joint Glory of Juſtice and Mercy, *That Mercy and Truth might meet, and Righteouſneſs and Peace kiſs each other*;) and becauſe the Party offending was not able for it, he that would effectually ſuit for him, muſt likewiſe ſatisfy for him. And this Jeſus Chriſt did, as here follows. Now that he might do this, it was neceſſary that he ſhould be *God* able to ſave, and *Man* fit to ſave Man; *Man* that he might ſuffer, and *God* that his Suffering might be ſatisfying; *Man* that he might dy, and *God* that his Death might have Value to purchaſe Life to us.

The Son was fit to be incarnate for his Work, the middle Perſon in the Godhead to be Man's Mediator with God. That we had loſt was the Dignity of the Sons of God, and therefore his *only Son*, *only* fit to reſtore us to it: The Beauty defac'd in us was the Image of God; therefore the repairing and reimparting, a fit Work for his pureſt and perfecteſt Image, his Son, the Character of his Perſon.

Now this Incarnation of the Word, the Son of God, is the Foundation of all our Hopes; the Senſe of that great Promiſe, *The Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Serpent's Head:* And many others of the ſame Subſtance in the Prophets; the great Salvation ſo often foretold, and ſo long expected by the *Jews*. When this was fulfilled, that a Virgin did conceive by the Holy Ghoſt, *Then did the Heavens drop down Righteouſneſs from above, and the Earth bring forth Salvation*, Iſa. xlv. This ſeems to be that which the Church did ſo earneſtly wiſh, *Oh that thou wert as my Brother*, Cant. viii.

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.]

Though all his Life was one continual Act of ſuffering,

fering, from his living in the Cratch to his hanging on the Croſs; yet becauſe of the Briefneſs of this Confeſſion, as likewiſe becauſe this laſt Act was the greateſt and moſt remarkable of his Sufferings, and the Scripture itſelf doth (as ſuch) mention it moſt frequently, therefore it is here immediately ſubjoin'd to the Article of his Birth.

It is not for nothing that we have the Name of the *Roman* Judge here expreſt, under whom he ſuffered; though it is nothing to his Credit, yet it is to the Credit of Divine Wiſdom. Even this, conſidering the Nature and End of Chriſt's Death, being to ſatisfy a pronounced Sentence of Juſtice; though for others, it was a very agreeable Circumſtance that he ſhould not be ſuddenly or tumultuarily murdered, but be judicially, though unjuſtly, condemned.

Crucified.] Beſides, it made his Suffering more publick and ſolemn; and the Divine Providence ordered this, that he ſhould ſuffer under a *Roman* Judge, and ſo fall under this *Roman* kind of Puniſhment, being in itſelf a very ſhameful and painful kind of Death, and by the Sentence of the Law accurſed, that we might have the more Evidence of our Deliverance from that Shame, and Pain, and Curſe, that was due to us; *The Chaſtiſement of our Peace was upon him*, ſays the Prophet, *and by his Stripes we are healed.*

Suffered.] That he died, and what kind of Death you ſee is expreſt: But as many particular Sufferings of his Body are not here mentioned, ſo none of thoſe of his Soul, but all comprehended in this general Word, *He ſuffered.* Thoſe were too great to be duly expreſt in ſo ſhort a Form, and therefore are better expreſt by ſuppoſing them, and including them only in this, *He ſuffered.* As he that drew the Father among others, beholding the ſacrificing of his own Daughter, ſignified the Grief of the reſt in their

their Geſtures, and Viſages, and Tears, but drew the Father vailed; ſo here the Crucifying and Death of our Saviour are expreſt, but the unſpeakable Conflicts of his Soul are vailed under the general Term of Suffering. But ſure that inviſible Cup that came from his Father's Hand, was far more bitter than the Gall and Vinegar from the Hand of his Enemies; the piercing of his Soul far ſharper than the Nails and Thorns: He could anſwer theſe ſweetly with, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* But theſe other Pangs drew from him another kind of Word, *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me.*

Died.] No leſs would ſerve, and therefore he was *obedient even unto the Death*, as the Sentence againſt us did bear, and the Sacrifices of the Law did prefigure. When the Sacrifices drew back and went unwillingly to the Place, the Heathens accounted it an ill Preſage: Never Sacrifice more willing than Chriſt, *I lay down my Life for my Sheep*, (ſays he) *and no Man taketh it from me. As a Sheep before the Shearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his Mouth*, Iſa. l. *He gave his Back to the Smiters*, &c. *For this Hour came I into the World*, ſays he. And this his Death is our Life, though by it we are not freed from this temporal Death; yet, which is infinitely more, we are delivered from eternal Death, and, which is yet more, entitled to eternal Life; and therefore do no more ſuffer this temporal Death as a Curſe, but enjoy it as a Bleſſing, and may look upon it now, (ſuch as are in Chriſt, none other) not only as a Day of Deliverance, but of Coronation; the Exchange of our preſent Rags for long white Robes, and a Crown that fadeth not away.

Buried.] For the further Aſſurance of his Death, and Glory of his Reſurrection, as likewiſe to commend the Grave to us, as now a very ſweet reſting Place,

Place, he hath warmed the cold Bed of the Grave to a Chriſtian, that he need not fear to ly down in it, nor doubt that he ſhall riſe again, as we know and are after to hear that he did.

Deſcended into Hell.] The more Noiſe hath been about this Clauſe, I ſhall make the leſs. The Conceit of the Deſcent of Chriſt's Soul into the Place of the damn'd, to ſay no more nor harder of it, can never be made the neceſſary Senſe of theſe Words; nor is there any either Ground in Scripture, or any due End of ſuch a Deſcent, either agreed on, or at all alledgeable to perſuade the chuſing it as the beſt Senſe of them. Not to conteſt other Interpretations, I conceive, with Submiſſion, that it differs not much (poſſibly nothing) from the plain Word of his *Burial.* Not that the Author or Authors of this ſo brief a Confeſſion, would expreſs one Thing by divers Words, but that it may be, in the antienteſt Copies, only the one of them hath been in the Text; and in after Copies, in Tranſcribers Hands, the other hath crept into it, out of the Margin. But retaining it by all means as it is, it may ſignify the Abode and Continuance of Chriſt's Body in the Grave; in which Time he ſeem'd to have been ſwallowed up of Death, and that the Pit had ſhut her Mouth on him: But it appeared quickly otherwiſe; for, *The third Day he aroſe from the Dead.*

Theſe are great Things indeed that are ſpoken concerning Jeſus Chriſt, his Birth and Sufferings; but the greater our Unhappineſs, if we have no Portion in them. To hear of them only, and to enjoy nothing of them, is moſt miſerable; and thus it is through our Unbelief. Were it as common to believe in him, as to repeat theſe Words, or to come to Church and hear this Goſpel preached, then you would all make a pretty good Plea on it; but believe it, it is another kind of thing to believe than

all

all that, or than any thing that the moſt of us yet know. My Brethren, do not deceive yourſelves; that common High-way Faith will not ſerve, you are for all that ſtill Unbelievers in Chriſt's Account; and if ſo, for all the Riches of Comfort that are in him, you can receive none from him. It is a ſad Word that he ſays, *Becauſe ye believe not in me, ye ſhall dy in your Sins*; "Though I died for Sins, not "mine own but others, yet you remaining in Un-"godlineſs and Unbelief, that ſhall do you no good, "ye ſhall dy in your Sins for all that." It is ſuch a Faith as endears Chriſt to the Soul, unites it to him, makes Chriſt and it one, that makes all that is his to become ours; then we ſhall conclude aright, Chriſt hath ſuffered, therefore I ſhall not. As he ſaid to them that came to take him, *Is it I you ſeek? then let theſe go free*; ſo to the Law and Juſtice of God, "Seeing you have ſought and laid hold on "me, and made me ſuffer, let theſe go free that lay "hold on me by Faith; if you have any thing to "ſay to them, I am to anſwer for them, yea I have "done it already."

2. You that believe and live by this Death, be often in reviewing it, and meditating on it, that your Souls may be raviſhed with the Admiration of ſuch Love, and warm'd with a reflex Love to him *. Other Wonders, as you ſay, laſt for a while, but this is a laſting Wonder, not to the Ignorant, (the Cauſe of Wonder at other Things, is Ignorance indeed) but this is an everlaſting Wonder to thoſe that know it beſt, *viz.* to the very Angels. Let that loved Jeſus be fixed in your Hearts, who was for you nailed to the Croſs †. St. *Bernard* wonders that Men ſhould think on any thing elſe; *quantæ inſaniæ poſt tanti Regis adventum aliis negotiis*, &c. Sure it is great

* *Mira Dei dignitas, mira indignitas noſtra.*
† *Donec totus fixus in corde, qui totus fixus in cruce.*

Folly to think and eſteem much of any thing here, after his appearing; the Sun ariſing, drowns all the Stars. And withal, be daily crucifying Sin in yourſelves, be avenged on it for his ſake, and kill it becauſe it killed him.

3. Will you think any thing hard to do or ſuffer for him, that undertook and performed to the full ſo much for you †? If you had rather be your own than Chriſt's, much good do it you with yourſelves; but know, that if you are not Chriſt's but your own, you muſt look for as little of him to be yours. If ye be your own, you muſt bear all your own Sins, and all the Wrath that is due to them. But if you like not that, and reſolve to be no more your own but Chriſt's, then what have you to do but chearfully to embrace, yea earneſtly to ſeek all Opportunities to do him Service?

4. Theſe are the Steps of Chriſt's Humiliation; look on them then ſo, as to ſtudy to be like him particularly in that: Surely the Soul that hath moſt of Chriſt, hath moſt Humility. It is the Leſſon he peculiarly recommends to us from his own Example, which is the ſhorteſt and moſt effectual way of teaching. *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of Heart.* He ſays well, "Let Man be aſhamed to "be any longer proud, for whom God himſelf hum-"bled himſelf ſo low *." He became humble to expiate our Pride, and yet we will not baniſh that Pride that undid us, and follow that Way of Salvation, which is Humility. Jeſus Chriſt is indeed the Lilly of the Vallies, he grows no where but in the humble Heart.

Roſe again the third Day.]

When

† *Intolerabilis eſt impudentia, ut ubi ſe exinanivit majeſtas, vermiculus inflatur & intumeſcat.*

* *Erubeſcat homo ſuperbus eſſe, propter quem humilis factus eſt Deus.*

When humbled to the loweſt, then neareſt his Exaltation, as *Joſeph* in the Priſon. He could dy, for he was a Man, and a Man for that Purpoſe, that he might dy; but he could not be overcome by Death, for he was God, yea, by dying, he overcame Death, and ſo ſhew'd himſelf truly the Lord of Life. He ſtrangled that Lion in his own Den. The Whale ſwallowed *Jonah*, but it could not digeſt him; it was forced to caſt him up again at the appointed Time, the ſame with the Time here ſpecified, wherein the Prophet was a Figure of this great Prophet Jeſus Chriſt. The Grave hath a terrible Appetite, devours all, and ſtill cries, *Give, give, and never hath enough*, as *Agur* ſays; yet for all its Appetite, Chriſt was too great a Morſel for it to digeſt, too ſtrong a Priſoner for all its Bars and Iron Gates to keep him in. *It was impoſſible he ſhould be holden of it*, ſays St. *Peter*, Acts ii.

He hath made a Breach through Death, opened up a Paſſage on the other Side of it into Life, though otherwiſe indeed *veſtigia nulla retrorſum.* They that believe, that lay hold on him by Faith, they come through with him, follow him out at the ſame Breach, paſs through Death into Heaven; but the reſt find not the Paſſage out, it is as the Red Sea, paſſable only to the *Iſraelites*, therefore they muſt of Neceſſity ſink quite downwards through the Grave into Hell, through the firſt Death into the ſecond, and that is the terribleſt of all: That Death is indeed what one called the other, *The moſt terrible of all Terribles*, *The King of Terrors*, as it is in *Job*.

Now the only Aſſurance of that happy ſecond Reſurrection to the Life of Glory hereafter, is the firſt Reſurrection here to the Life of Grace; *Bleſſed are they that are Partakers of the firſt Reſurrection, for on ſuch the ſecond Death hath no Power.* For the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt is to the Believer,

the Evidence of his Redemption compleated, that all was paid by Chriſt as our Surety, and ſo he ſet at Liberty, (which the Apoſtle teaches us, when he ſays, *He aroſe for our Righteouſneſs*; and again, *It is God that juſtifies, who ſhall condemn; it is Chriſt that died, or rather that is riſen again.*) Nor is it only the Pattern and Pledge of a Believer's Reſurrection, but it is the Efficient both of that laſt Reſurrection of his Body to Glory, and of the firſt, of his Soul to Grace.

The Life of a Believer is derived and flows forth from Chriſt as his Head, and is myſtically one Life with his, and therefore ſo, as himſelf expreſſeth it, *becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo*, Apoc. i. 8. Therefore is he called the *firſt begotten from the dead, and the beginning*, Ἐν πᾶσιν πρωτεύων Col. i. 15. He is firſt in all, and from him ſpring all theſe Streams that *make glad the City of God.* Therefore the Apoſtle, in his Thankſgiving for our new Life and lively Hopes, leaves not out that, *Bleſſed be God, the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; that is the Conduit of all. And he expreſſes it in the ſame Place, that *We are begotten again to a lively Hope, by the Reſurrection of Jeſus from the dead.* But, alas! we prejudge ourſelves of all that rich Comfort that is wrapt up in this, by living to ourſelves and our Luſts, and to the World, having not our Conſciences purified from dead Works. How few of us are there that ſet that Ambition of *Paul* before us, *deſiring above all things to know him, and the Power of his Reſurrection. To be made conformable*, that is the Knowledge, as he there expreſſes it, a lively experienced Knowledge of that Power.

2. This, rightly conſidered, will anſwer all our Doubts and Fears in the Church's hardeſt Times; when in its Deliverance there appears nothing but Impoſſibilities; ſo low that its Enemies are perſuaded

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to conclude, that it ſhall never riſe again, and its Friends are oppreſt with fearing ſo much: Yet he that brought up his own Son Jeſus from the dead, can and will reſtore his Church, for which he gave that his only begotten Son to the Death. *Son of Man*, ſays he, *can theſe dry Bones live?* (thus often looks the Church's Deliverance, which is there the proper Senſe.) The Prophet anſwered moſt wiſely, *Lord, thou knoweſt*, " 'tis a Work only for thee to " know and to do;" and by his Spirit they were revived. And as here it looked hopeleſs, as the Diſciples thought they were at giving it over, and blaming almoſt their former Credulity, *We thought this ſhould have been he that ſhould have delivered* Iſrael; *and beſides all this, to Day is the third Day.* True the third Day was come, but it was not yet ended; yea, he roſe in the Beginning of it, though they yet knew it not, nor him preſent to whom they ſpake: But toward the End of it, they likewiſe knew that he was riſen, when he was pleaſed to diſcover himſelf to them. Thus, though the Enemies of the Church prevail ſo far againſt it, that it ſeems buried, and a Stone laid to the Grave's Mouth, yet it ſhall riſe again, and at the very fitteſt, the appointed Time, as Chriſt the third Day. Thus the Church expreſſes her Confidence, *Hoſ.* vi. 1, 2. *In the third Day he will raiſe us up.* Whatſoever it ſuffers, it ſhall gain by it, and be more beautiful and glorious in its Reſtorement *.

He aſcended into Heaven.] He roſe again, not to remain on Earth as before, but to return to his Throne of Majeſty, from whence his Love drew him, according to his Prayer, *Joh.* xvii. which was a certain Prediction of it. He had now accompliſhed the great Work he came for, and was therefore by the Covenant and Tranſaction betwixt his Father and

* *Mergas profundo, pulchrior exilit.*

and him, to be exalted to his former Glory; the ſame Perſon that before, but with the Surceaſe of another Nature, which he had not before, and of a new relative Dignity, being to ſit as King of his Church, which he had purchaſed with his Blood.

And to expreſs this, it is added, that *he ſits at the Right Hand of God*, *Pſal.* cx. 1. &c. *Eph.* i. 20, 21, &c. By which, according to its alluſive Senſe, is expreſt, not only his matchleſs Glory, but his Dominion and Rule as Prince of Peace, the alone King of his Church, her ſupreme Lawgiver and mighty Protector, and Conqueror of all his Enemies, ruling his holy Hill of *Zion* with his golden Scepter of his Word, and breaking his Enemies the ſtrongeſt of them in pieces, with the *Iron Rod* of his Juſtice, as we have it in the 2d *Pſalm.* They attempt in vain to unſettle his Throne, it is very far out of their Reach, as high as the Right Hand of God; *For ever, O God, thy Throne is eſtabliſhed in Heaven.* What Way is there for the Worms of this Earth to do any thing againſt it?

As in theſe is the Glory of Chriſt, ſo they contain much Comfort of a Chriſtian. In that very Elevation of our Nature to ſuch Dignity, is indeed, as the Ancients ſpeak, *mira dignatio*, that our Fleſh is exalted above all the glorious Spirits, the Angels; and they adore the Nature of Man, in the Perſon of Man's glorified Saviour, the Son of God. This Exaltation of Jeſus Chriſt doth ſo reflect a Dignity on the Nature of Mankind; but the Right and Poſſeſſion of it is not univerſal, but is contracted and appropriate to them that believe on him. *He took not on him the Nature of Angels*, ſays the Apoſtle, but *the Nature of the Seed of* Abraham. He ſays, not the Nature of Man, though it is ſo, but of the Seed of *Abraham*; not ſo much becauſe of his Deſcent from that particular Stock after the Fleſh,

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as in the ſpiritual Senſe of *Abraham*'s Seed, as it is at large cleared, *Rom.* ix. The reſt of Mankind forfeits all that Dignity and Benefit that ariſes to their Nature in Chriſt, by their Diſtance and Diſunion from him through Unbelief. But the Believer hath not only naturally one kind of Being with the Humanity of Chriſt, but is myſtically one with the Perſon of Chriſt, with whole Chriſt, God-Man, and by virtue of that myſterious Union, they that partake of it, partake of the very preſent Happineſs and Glory of Chriſt, they have a real Intereſt in whatſoever he is and hath, in all his Dignities and Power; and in that Senſe they that are juſtified are glorified, in that Chriſt is exalted, they are ſo too in him. Where a Part, and the chief Part of themſelves is, and is in Honour, there they may account themſelves to be †. A Man is ſaid to be crowned when the Crown is ſet upon his Head, now our Head Chriſt is already crowned.

In ſum, Believers have in this aſcending and enthroning of Chriſt, unſpeakable Comfort through their Intereſt in Chriſt, both in Conſideration of his preſent Affection to them, and his effectual Interceſſion for them; and in the aſſured Hope this gives them of their own after Happineſs and Glory with him.

1. In all his Glory he forgets them not, he puts not off his Bowels with his low Condition here, but hath carried it along to his Throne; his Majeſty and Love ſuit very well, and both in their higheſt Degree; * as all the Waters of his Sufferings did not quench his Love. Nor left he it behind him buried in the Grave, but it aroſe with him being ſtronger than Death; ſo he let it not fall to the Earth when he

† *Ubi portio mea regnat, ibi me regnare credo.*

* *Bene conveniunt, & in una ſede morantur, majeſtas & amor.*

he aſcended on high, but it aſcended with him, and he ſtill retains it in his Glory. And that our Fleſh, which he took on on Earth, he took up into Heaven, as a Token of indiſſoluble Love, betwixt him and thoſe whom he redeemed, and ſends down from thence as the rich Token of his Love, his Spirit into their Hearts; ſo that theſe are mutual Remembrances. Can he forget his own on Earth, having their Fleſh ſo cloſely united to him? you ſee he does not, he feels what they ſuffer, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* And can they forget him whoſe Spirit dwells in them, and records lively to their Hearts the Paſſages of his Love, and brings all thoſe things to their Remembrance (as himſelf tells us, that Spirit would do) and ſo indeed proves the Comforter by repreſenting unto us that his Love, the Spring of our Comforts? And when we ſend up our Requeſts, we know of a Friend before us there, a moſt true and a moſt faithful Friend that fails not to ſpeak for us, what we ſay and much more; *he liveth*, ſays the Apoſtle, *to make Interceſſion for us.* This is the Ground of a Chriſtian's Boldneſs at the Throne of Grace: Yea therefore is the Father's Throne the Throne of Grace to us, becauſe the Throne of our Mediator Jeſus Chriſt is beſide it: He ſits at his right Hand, otherwiſe it could be nothing to us but a Throne of Juſtice, and ſo in regard of our Guiltineſs, a Throne of Terror and Affrightment, which we would rather fly from, than draw near unto.

Laſtly, as we have the Comfort of ſuch a Friend, to prepare Acceſs to our Prayers there, that are the Meſſengers of our Souls; ſo of this, that our Souls themſelves when they remove from theſe Houſes of Clay, ſhall find Admiſſion there through him. And this he tells his Diſciples again and again, and in them all his own, that their Intereſt was ſo much in his aſcend-

aſcending to his Glory, *I go to prepare a Place for you, that where I am, there ye may be alſo.*

It will not be hard to perſuade them that believe theſe things, and are Portioners in them, to ſet their Hearts on them, and for that End to take them off from all other things as unworthy of them, yea, it will be impoſſible for them to live without the frequent and ſweet Thoughts of that Place where their Lord Jeſus is. Yet it is often needful to remember them, that this cannot be enough done, and by repreſenting theſe things to them, to draw them more upwards; and it is beſt done in the Apoſtle's Words, *If ye be riſen with Chriſt, mind thoſe things that are above, where he ſits*, &c. If ye be riſen with him, follow him on, let your Hearts be where he is; they that are one with him, the bleſſed Seed of the Woman, do find that Unity drawing them Heaven-wards: But, alas! the moſt of us are liker the accurſed Seed of the Serpent, baſely grovelling on this Earth, and licking the Duſt; the Converſation of the Believer is in Heaven, where he hath a Saviour, and from whence he looks for him. Truly there is little of a true Chriſtian here, (and that argues that there is little of the Truth of Chriſtianity among us, who are altogether here) his Head in Heaven, and his Heart there, and theſe are the two Principles of Life. Let us then ſuit the Apoſtle's Advice, and ſo enjoy the Comfort he ſubjoins, that by our Affections above, we may know, *That our Life is hid with Chriſt in God, and therefore that when he, who is our Life, ſhall appear, we likewiſe ſhall appear with him in Glory.* *Exhort.* 2.

From thence he ſhall come to judge, &c.] We have in this to conſider, 1. That there is an univerſal Judgment. 2. That Chriſt is the Judge. 3. Something to be added of the Quality of the Judgment; all the three we have together, *Acts* xvii. 31.

That it is, is we know, the frequent Doctrine of the Scriptures, and hath been ever the Belief of the Godly from the Beginning, as we may perceive by that ancient Prophecy of *Enoch*, recorded by St. *Jude*, and we are ſo to believe it as a divine Truth: And yet there is ſo much juſt Reaſon for it, that natural Men by the few Sparkles of Light in their Conſciences, have had ſome dark Notions and Conjectures of it, as is evident in *Plato* and the *Platonicks*, and not only the Philoſophers but the Poets: it may be too, that they have been helped by ſome ſcattered Glimmerings of Light concerning this, borrowed from the Jews, and traditionally paſt from Hand to Hand among the Heathen, and therefore diſguiſed and altered after their Faſhion.

If we be perſuaded that there a is ſupream Ruler of the World, who is moſt wiſe, and juſt, and good, this will perſuade us not only that there is ſome other Eſtate and Being, than that we ſee here, appointed for Man, the moſt excellent, the reaſonable Part of this viſible World; but that there ſhall be a ſolemn judicial Proceeding, in entring and ſtating him in that after Being. The many Miſeries of this preſent Life, and that the beſt of Men are uſually deepeſt Sharers in them, though it hath a little ſtaggered, not only wiſe Heathens, but ſometimes ſome of the prime Saints of God, yet it hath never prevailed with any but brutal and debauch'd Spirits, to conclude againſt divine Providence, but rather to reſolve upon this, that of Neceſſity there muſt be another kind of Iſſue, a final Cataſtrophe reducing all the preſent Confuſions into Order, and making all Odds even, as you ſay *. It is true that ſometimes here the Lord's right Hand finds out his Enemies, and is known by the Judgment which he executes on them; and on the other Side, gives ſome Inſtances of

* *Cum res hominum tantâ caligine volvi.* Claud.

of his gracious Providence to his Church, and to particular godly Men even before the Sons of Men: But theſe are but ſome few Preludes and Pledges of that great Judgment, ſome he gives, that we forget not his Juſtice and Goodneſs, but much is reſerved, that we expect not all nor the moſt here but hereafter. And it is certainly moſt congruous that this be done, not only in each particular apart, but moſt conſpicuouſly in all together, that the Juſtice and Mercy of God may not only be accompliſhed, but acknowledged and magnified, and that not only ſeverally in the ſeveral Perſons of Men and Angels, but univerſally, jointly, and manifeſtly in the View of all, as upon one Theatre, Angels and Men being at once, ſome of them the Objects of that Juſtice, others of Mercy, but all of them Spectators of both. Each ungodly Man ſhall not only read, whether he will or no, the Juſtice of God in himſelf, and his own Condemnation, which moſt of them ſhall do before that time in their Soul's particular Judgment: But they ſhall then ſee the ſame Juſtice in all the reſt of the condemn'd World, and the reſt in them, and to the great Increaſe of their Anguiſh, they ſhall ſee likewiſe the Glory of that Mercy, that ſhall then ſhine ſo bright in all the Elect of God, from which they themſelves are juſtly ſhut out, and delivered up to eternal Miſery.

And on the other Side, the Godly ſhall with unſpeakable Joy behold not only a Part as before, but the whole Sphere both of the Juſtice and Mercy of their God, and ſhall with one Voice admire and applaud him in both. 2. Beſides, the Proceſs of many Mens Actions cannot be full at the End of their Life, as it ſhall be at that Day; many have very large After-reckonings to come upon them for thoſe Sins of others to which they are acceſſory, though committed after their Death, as the Sins of ill edu-

cated Children to be laid to the Charge of their Parents, the Sins of ſuch as any have corrupted, either by their Counſels, or Opinions, or evil Examples, *&c.*

2. *He*, the Lord Jeſus ſhall be Judge in that great Day, the Father, and Spirit, and his Authority are all one, for they are all one God and one Judge; but it ſhall be particularly exerciſed and pronounced by our Saviour God-Man, *Jeſus Chriſt*. That eternal *Word* by whom all things were made, by him all ſhall be judged, and ſo he ſhall be the Word in that laſt Act of Time, as in the firſt; he ſhall judicially pronounce that great and final Sentence, that ſhall ſtand unalterable in Eternity: And not only as the eternal Son of God, but withal the Son of Man, and ſo ſit as King, and inveſted with all Power in Heaven and Earth. *By that Man whom he hath appointed to judge the quick and the dead*, Acts xvii. 31. and *Acts* i. 11. *This ſame Jeſus ſhall ſo come, in like Manner as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven.* The Powers of the World and of Hell are combin'd againſt his Throne, therefore they ſhall be his Footſtool ſitting on that Throne, and the Crown which he hath purchaſt for Believers, he ſhall ſet it on their Heads with his own Hand. This ſhall be exceeding Joy and Comfort to all that have believed on him, that their Redeemer ſhall be their Judge, he that was judged for them, ſhall judge them and paſs Sentence according to that Covenant of Grace that holds in him, pronouncing them free from the Wrath which he himſelf endured for them, and Heirs of that Life that he bought with his dearest Blood.

And that gives no leſs Acceſſion to the Miſery of the Wicked, that that ſame Jeſus whom they oppoſed and deſpiſed, ſo many of them as heard any thing of him, he ſhall ſit upon their final Judgment, and pronounce Sentence againſt them, not partially avenging

ging his own Quarrel on them, no Word of that, but moſt juſtly returning them the Reward of their Ungodlineſs and Unbelief; that great Shepherd ſhall thus make that great Separation of his Sheep from the Goats.

3. Of the Manner we have thus much here, that he ſhall come from Heaven, as the Scriptures teach us, *Matth.* xxiv. 30. he ſhall viſibly appear in the Air, he ſhall come *in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory*, attended with innumerable Companies of glorious Angels that ſhall ſerve him, both in the congregating his Elect, and ſegregating them from the reprobate; but himſelf in the Brightneſs of his own Majeſty, infinitely ſurpaſſing them all, 2 *Theſſ.* i. 7. His firſt Coming was mean and obſcure, ſuiting his Errand, for then he came to be judged; but that laſt Coming ſhall be glorious, for he comes to judge, and his Judgment ſhall be in Righteouſneſs, *Acts* xvii. 31. *There ſhall be no miſ-alledging, or miſ-proving, or miſ-judging there; all the Judgments of Men, whether private or judicial, ſhall be rejudged there according to Truth, ſuch a Judge before whom all things are naked; and not only ſhall he know and judge all aright, but all they that are judged, ſhall themſelves be convinced that it is ſo; then all will ſee that none are condemn'd but moſt deſervedly, and that the Lord's Juſtice is pure and ſpotleſs in them that periſh, as his Grace, without Prejudice to his Juſtice, it being ſatisfied in Chriſt for them that are ſav'd. The Books ſhall be opened, thoſe that Men ſo willingly, the moſt of them, keep ſhut and claſpt up, and are ſo unwilling to look into, their own accuſing Conſciences: The Lord will proceed formally againſt the Wicked according to the Books; no Wrong ſhall be done them, they ſhall have fair Juſtice, and they ſhall ſee what they would

* *Juſte judicabit qui injuſte judicatus eſt.* Aug.

would not look upon before; when by ſeeing, that might have been blotted out, and a free Acquittance written in its ſtead. And that the Believer ſhall read in his Conſcience at that Day, which through the Dimneſs of Faith and dark troubled Eſtate of his Soul, he many times could not read here below.

We are gaping ſtill after new Notions, but a few things wiſely and practically known, drawn down from the Head unto the Heart, are better than all that Variety of knowing that Men are ſo taken up with; *Paucis literis opus eſt ad mentem bonam.* This and ſuch like common Truths we think we both know and believe well enough; but truly if this great Point, touching the great and laſt Judgment, were indeed known and believed by us, it would draw our Minds to more frequent and more deep Thoughts of it; and were we often and ſerious in thoſe Thoughts, they would have ſuch Influence into all our other Thoughts, and the whole Courſe of our Lives, as would much alter the Frame of them from what they are. Did we think of this Goſpel which we preach and hear, that we muſt then be judged by it, we would be now more ruled by it; but the Truth is, we are willingly forgetful of theſe things, they are melancholly penſive Thoughts, and we are content that the Noiſe of Affairs or any Vanities fill the Ear of our Minds, that we hear them not. If we be forced at ſome times to hear of this laſt Judgment to come, it poſſibly caſts our Conſcience into ſome little trembling Fit for the time, as it did *Felix*; but he was not, nor are we ſo happy, as to be ſhaken out of the Cuſtom and Love of Sin by it: We promiſe it fair, as he did, ſome other time; but if that time never come, this Day will come, and they that ſhun to hear or think of it, ſhall then ſee it, and the Sight of it will be as terrible and amazing, as the timely Thoughts of it would have been

been profitable. It is no doubt an unpleaſing Subject to all ungodly earthly Minds, but ſure it were our Wiſdom to be of that Mind now, that then we ſhall be forced to be of; we ſhall then read by the Light of that Fire that ſhall burn the World, the Vanity of all thoſe things whereon we now dote ſo fooliſhly. Let us therefore be perſuaded to think ſo now, and diſengage our Hearts, and fix them on him who ſhall then judge us, *Kiſs the Son*, &c. They are only happy that truſt in him; that which is the Affrightment of others, is their great Joy and Deſire; they love and long for that Day, both for their Saviour's Glory in it, and their own full Happineſs, and that their Love to his appearing, is to them a certain Pledge of the Crown they are to receive at his appearing, 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. *at that Day*, ſays the Apoſtle; this Day he eſteems more of than all his Days, therefore he names it no otherwiſe than *that Day:* How may we know what Day it was he meant? his Coronation-day. But of all Men, ſure the Hypocrite likes leaſt the Mention and Remembrance of that Day; there is no Room for Diſguiſes there, all Masks muſt off, and all things appear juſt as they are, and that is the worſt News to him that can be.

I believe in the Holy Ghoſt.] God is both a Spirit and holy; but this Name, perſonally taken, is peculiarly that of the third Perſon, proceeding from the Father and the Son, by a Way that can neither be expreſſed nor conceived; holy in himſelf, and the Author and Cauſe of all Holineſs in us.

It is neither uſeful nor ſafe for us to entangle our Thoughts in Diſputes concerning this Myſtery, but it is neceſſary that we know, and acknowledge, and believe in this *holy Spirit*; it is he in whom and by whom we believe: We cannot know God, nor the things of God, but by the Spirit of God, 1 *Cor.* ii.

11. nor ſay that Jeſus is God, but by the ſame Spirit, 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. We know that this Holy Trinity co-operates in the Work of our Salvation; the Father hath given us his Son, and the Son hath ſent us his Spirit, and the Spirit gives us Faith, which unites us to the Son, and through him to the Father: The Father ordained our Redemption, the Son wrought it, the Holy Spirit reveals and applies it.

The remaining Articles have the Fruit of that great Work, the ſending of the Son of God in the Fleſh, his ſuffering, and dying, *&c.* what it is, and to whom it belongs; the Reſult of Chriſt's Incarnation and Death, *cui & cujus gratiâ.* Yea, the great Deſign of God in the other great Work, that of the firſt Creation, was this ſecond; he made the World, that out of it he might make this *elect World*, that is called his *Church*: The Son fell on Sleep, on a dead Sleep, indeed the Sleep of Death on the Croſs, that out of his Side might be framed his Spouſe, which is his Church. The Holy Spirit moving upon the Souls of Men in their Converſion, aims at this ſame End, the gathering and compleating of his Church; he is the Breath of Life that breath'd on theſe new Creatures that make up this Society. So then, this is as much as to ſay, I verily believe that God had ſuch a Purpoſe in making the World, and in ſending his Son into it, and they both in ſending the Spirit, and the Spirit in his working to make a holy Church, a Number that ſhould ſerve God here, and enjoy him in Eternity; and I believe that God cannot fall ſhort of his End, that bleſſed Trinity doth not project and work in vain: I believe therefore there is ſuch a Company, there is a *holy univerſal Church*; [univerſal] diffuſed through the ſeveral Ages, and Places, and Nations of the World; [holy] waſh'd in the Blood of Chriſt, and ſanctified by his Spirit; that it is, that it hath in all Ages continued from the Begin-

Beginning, and ſhall continue to the End of the World, increaſing ſtill and growing to its appointed Perfection, amidſt all the Enmities and Oppoſitions that it encounters in the World. *I ſend you forth*, ſays Chriſt, *as Sheep among Wolves.* The Preſervation of the Church is a continuing Miracle, it reſembles *Daniel*'s Safety among the hungry Lions, but prolonged from one Age to another. The Ship, wherein Chriſt is, may be weather-beaten, but it ſhall not periſh. So then, you ſee that this Confeſſion is altogether no other but your Acknowledgment of God in himſelf, Three in One, and One in Three, and his Works of the Creation of the World, and Redemption of Man by his Son, made Man for that Purpoſe, and appropriate to them for whom it was deſign'd by his Holy Spirit; and with this Acknowledgment, our Reliance on this God as the Author of our Being and Well-being.

The Communion of Saints.] This ſprings immediately from the former: If they make one Church, then they have a very near Communion together; they are one Body united to that glorious Head that is above; they have all one ſpiritual Life flowing from him: And this Communion holds not only on Earth and in Heaven apart, but even betwixt Heaven and Earth; the Saints on Earth make up the ſame Body with thoſe already in Glory; they are born to the ſame Inheritance by new Birth, though the others are entred in Poſſeſſion before them. This their common Title to ſpiritual Bleſſings, and eternal Bleſſedneſs, prejudges none of them; their Inheritance is ſuch as is not leſſened by the Multitude of Heirs, it is entire to each one, and that Grace and Salvation that flows from Chriſt, *the Sun of Righteouſneſs*, is as the Light of the Sun where it ſhines, none hath the leſs becauſe of others partaking of it. The Happineſs of the Saints is called *an Inheritance in*

Light, which all may enjoy without Abatement to any: They have each one their Crown; they need not, they do not envy one another, nor *Ottoman*-like, one Brother to kill another to reign alone; yet, they rejoice in the Happineſs and Salvation of one another, they are glad at the Graces that God beſtows on their Brethren, for they know that they all belong to the ſame firſt Owner, and return to his Glory; and that whatſoever Diverſity is in them, they all agree and concenter in that Service and Good of the Church; and ſo what each one hath of Gifts and Graces belongs to all by virtue of this Communion. Thus ought each of them to think, and every one of them humbly and charitably ſo to uſe what he hath himſelf, and ingenuouſly to rejoice in that which others have, as the Apoſtle reaſons at large, 1 *Cor.* xii.

I believe a holy Catholick Church, and the Communion of Saints.]

We may ſee the Worth and the Neceſſity of Holineſs, how much it is regarded in the whole Work; for this very thing did Chriſt give himſelf for his Church, *that he might ſanctify it*, &c. *Eph.* v. 26. ſo the End of our Redemption: And if we look as far forward as Salvation, there perfect Holineſs; nothing unclean ſhall enter that holy City, and *without Holineſs no Man ſhall ſee God:* And look again as far back as our Election, *Eph.* i. 4. and theſe that are not Partakers of this, do but delude themſelves, in dreaming of Intereſt in the reſt: No waſhing in the Blood of Chriſt to Remiſſion, but withal *by the Spirit to Sanctification*; no Comfort to the Unholy in their Reſurrection, becauſe no hope of that to follow on it, that follows here, eternal Life: No, without ſhall be Dogs. In the baſe and fooliſh Opinion of the World, Holineſs is a Reproach, or at the beſt but a mean poor Commendation, as you ſpeak of it diſ-

diſdainfully, a *good*, *ſilly*, *holy Body*; and Men are more pleaſed with any other Title: They had a great deal rather be called learned, or wiſe, or ſtout, or comely, than holy *. But God eſteems otherwiſe of it, whoſe Eſteem is the true Rule of Worth. That forecited Place, *a glorious Church*: How? *Holy and without Blemiſh*; that is indeed the true Beauty of the Soul, makes it like God, and that is its Comelineſs. We ſee the Lord himſelf delights to be known much by this Stile, and glorified by it, *Holy, Holy, Holy*, ſo *Exod.* xv. *Glorious in Holineſs*; and the Spirit of God ſtill called the *Holy Spirit*. How much then are they miſtaken concerning Heaven, that think to find the Way to it out of the Path of Holineſs, which is indeed *via regni*, the only Way that leads unto it. Reprove you of Unholineſs, you ſay, you are not Saints. No? So much the worſe, for they that mean to ſhare in the Pardon of Sin, and eternal Life, muſt be ſuch. If you be content ſtill not to be Saints, go on; but know, that they that are not in ſome meaſure Saints in Grace here, ſhall never be Saints in Glory hereafter.

Forgiveneſs of Sins.] Notwithſtanding Forgiveneſs of Sins, there is a Neceſſity of Holineſs, though not as meriting it, as leading unto Happineſs. But on the other Side, notwithſtanding the higheſt Point of Holineſs we can attain, there is a Neceſſity of this Forgiveneſs of Sins. Tho' Believers make up a holy Church and Company of Saints, yet there is a Debt upon them that their Holineſs pays not; yea, they are ſo far from having a Superplus for a ſtanding Treaſure after all paid, that all the Holineſs of the Saints together, will not pay the leaſt Farthing of that Debt they owe. *As for me, I will walk in mine Integrity*, ſays *David*, *Pſal.* xxvi. 11. How then, adds

* *Malumus audire O virum doctum, quam O virum bonum.* Sen.

he, "this ſhall juſtify me ſufficiently," no, *but redeem thou me, and be merciful to me*; ſo 1 Joh. i. 6, 7. *If we ſay, we have no Sin, we are Liars*, &c. *And walk in Darkneſs*, &c. And yet in the next Verſe, though we do walk in the Light, yet is there need of the *Blood of Jeſus Chriſt to cleanſe us from all Sin*; and ſo throughout the Scriptures. All the Integrity of the Godly under the Law did not exempt them from offering Sacrifice, which was the Expiation of Sin in the Figure, looking forward to that great and ſpotleſs Sacrifice, that was to be ſlain for the Sins of the World; and thoſe that believe the Goſpel, the Application of that juſtifying Blood that ſtreams forth in the Doctrine of the Goſpel, is not only needful to waſh in for their cleanſing in their firſt Converſion, but to be reapplied to the Soul, for taking off the daily contracted Guiltineſs of new Sins. *It is a* Fountain opened and ſtanding open for Sin and for Uncleanneſs, as that Sea of Braſs before the Sanctuary, *&c.* They that are clean have ſtill need of waſhing, at leaſt, their Feet, as Chriſt ſpeaks to St. *Peter.*

The Conſideration of that precious Blood ſhed for our Sins, is the ſtrongeſt Perſuaſive to Holineſs, and to the avoiding and hating of Sin. So far is the Doctrine of Juſtification (right underſtood) from animating Men to Sin. But becauſe of the woful Continuance of Sin in the Godly, while they continue in this Region of Sin and Death, therefore is there a continual Neceſſity of new Recourſe to this great Expiation. Thus St. *John* joins theſe two, 1 *Joh.* ii. 1, 2.

You think it an eaſy Matter, and a Thing that for your own Eaſe you willingly believe, the Forgiveneſs of Sins. It is eaſy indeed, after our Faſhion, eaſy to imagine that we believe ſuch a thing when we hear it, becauſe we let it paſs and queſtion it not, we think it may be true, and think no farther on it,

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while we neither know truly what Sin is, nor feel the Weight of our own Sins: But where a Soul is convinced of the Nature of Sin, and its own Guiltineſs, there to believe Forgiveneſs, is not ſo eaſy a Task.

In believing this Forgiveneſs of Sins, and ſo the other Privileges that attend it, there be theſe three Things gradually leading one to the other. 1. To believe that there is ſuch a Thing, and that it is purchaſed by the Death of Chriſt, and ſo attainable by coming unto him for it. 2. By this the Soul finding itſelf ready to ſink under the Burden of its own Sins, is perſuaded to go to him, and lay over that Load on him, and itſelf withal reſolves to reſt on him for this Forgiveneſs, this is to believe in him *who is the Lord our Righteouſneſs.* 3. Upon this believing on him for Forgiveneſs, follows a reflex believing of that Forgiveneſs; not continually and inſeparably, eſpecially if we take the Degree of Aſſurance ſomewhat high, but yet in itſelf it is apt to follow, and often in God's gracious Diſpenſation doth follow upon that former Act of believing, through the Clearneſs and Strength of Faith in the Soul, and ſometimes withal, is back'd with an expreſs peculiar Teſtimony of God's own Spirit: To believe and to grow ſtronger in believing, and to aſpire to the Aſſurance of Faith is our conſtant Duty; but that immediate Teſtimony of the Spirit is an arbitrary Beam that God reſerves in his own Hand, yet ſuch a Gift as we may not only lawfully ſeek, but do fooliſhly prejudge ourſelves and ſlight it, if we neglect to ſeek it, and want ſo rich a Bleſſing for want of asking, and withal, labouring to keep our Hearts in a due Diſpoſe and Frame for entertaining it. The keeping our Conſciences pure, as much as may be, doth not only keep the comfortable Evidence of Pardon cleareſt and leaſt interrupted within us, but

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is the likelieſt to receive thoſe pure Joys, that flow immediately into the Soul from the Spirit of God. The Teſtimony of our Conſcience is (if we damp it not ourſelves) our continual Feaſt, but that Teſtimony of the Spirit is a ſuperadded Taſte of higher Comfort out of God's own Hand, as it were a Piece of Heaven in the Soul, which he ſometimes cheers it withal: Where he hath firſt given much Love and ardent Deſires after himſelf, they are ſhort of that Light, in the Fulneſs whereof we hope to dwell hereafter. But beſides that, God is moſt free in that Particular, and knows what is fitteſt for us; the greateſt part even of true Chriſtians yet do not ſo walk, nor attend to that Spiritualneſs that is capable of ſuch Viſits.

The Reſurrection of the Body.] The Comfort of theſe Privileges, oppoſed to thoſe grand Evils that we feel or fear, Sanctification to the Power of Sin, Juſtification or Forgiveneſs to the Guilt of Sin, the Reſurrection to temporal Death, and Life eternal to the ſecond or eternal Death.

This is the raiſing of the ſelf-ſame Body that is laid in the Duſt, otherwiſe, the giving of a Body to the Soul again, muſt have ſome other Name, for *Reſurrection* it cannot be called.

That God can do this, notwithſtanding all imaginable Difficulties in it, have we not Proof enough in what he hath done; ſure that which he did in the Beginning of Time, the framing the whole World of nothing, is more than a ſufficient Pledge of this that is to be done in the End of Time.

That he will do it, we have his own Word for it, and the Pledge of it in raiſing his Son Jeſus, therefore called *the firſt begotten from the dead*; this as relating to Believers who are one with him. The Reſurrection of the Dead in general is an Act of Power, but to the Godly an Act of Grace, to the Wicked

Wicked of Juſtice; both ſhall riſe by the Power of Chriſt, but to the one as a Judge, and a Judge that ſhall condemn them; to the other as their Head, and their Saviour. *Joſeph*'s two Fellow Priſoners were both taken out of the Priſon, and at the ſame time, but the one to the Court, the other to the Gallows; ſo in the Reſurrection, *Joh.* v. 29.

The Confeſſion of Faith being of ſuch things as belong to Believers, and are their Happineſs, therefore their Reſurrection is particularly here intended, as we ſee eternal Life and Glory is ſubjoined to it.

Our Bodies are raiſed that were Companions and Partakers of our Good and Evil in our Abode upon Earth, that they may in Eternity be Companions and Partakers of our Reward: Thoſe of the Ungodly to ſuit their condemned Souls, ſhall be fill'd with Shame, and Vileneſs, and Miſery; and thoſe that were in their lower Eſtate here Temples of the Holy Ghoſt, ſhall be fill'd with that Fulneſs of Joy, that ſhall run over from the Soul unto them; they ſhall be conform to the happy and glorious Souls to which they ſhall be united, yea to the glorious Body of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. There ſhall then be nothing but Beauty, and Glory and Immortality in them that are now frail and mortal, and being dead, do putrify and turn to Duſt. He ſhall change our vile Bodies, and make them like unto his moſt glorious Body; but as St. *Bernard* ſays well, *If we would be ſure of this, that our Bodies ſhall be conform to his, in the Glory to come, ſee our Souls be here conform to his, in that Humility which he ſo much manifeſted whilſt he dwelt among Men*; if we would that then our vile Body be made like his glorious Body, let our proud Heart now be made like his humble Heart.

Life eternal.] Our Confeſſion of Faith ends in that which is the End of our Faith, our everlaſting Salvation

vation, or eternal Life; of which, all that we can ſay is but ſtammering, and all our Knowledge and Conceiting of it but Ignorance, in regard of what it is; yet ſo much we know, or may know of it, as, if we knew aright, would certainly draw us more into the Deſires and Purſuit of it. The very Name of Life is ſweet, but then eſpecially as it is here meant, in the pureſt and ſweeteſt Senſe, for a truly happy Life*. For a Life full of Miſery is ſcarce worth the Name of Life, and the longer it were, the worſe; therefore the miſerable Eſtate of damned Souls, tho' immortal in it, is called Death. So then by this *Life*, true and full Bleſſedneſs being meant, and then that added, that it is *eternal* Life, what can be imagined more to make it deſirable.

So happy, that there ſhall not be the ſmalleſt Drop of any Evil or Bitterneſs in it, pure unmixt Bliſs, nothing preſent in it that is diſpleaſing, nor nothing wanting that is delightful; and everlaſting, that when Millions of Years (if there were any ſuch reckoning there) are rowl'd about, it ſhall be as far from ending as at the firſt.

A very little Knowledge of this bleſſed Life, would make us clean out of Love with the Life, that now we make ſuch Account of: What can it be that ties us here? The known Shortneſs of this Life, were it more happy than it is to any, might make it of leſs Eſteem with us; but then withal, being ſo full of Miſeries and Sins, ſo ſtuffed with Sorrows round about us, and within ourſelves; that if the longeſt of it can be called long, it is only the Multitude of Miſeries in it, can challenge that Name for it. Such a World of bodily Diſeaſes, here one's Head paining him, another his Stomach †, ſome complaining of

* *Non eſt vivere, ſed valere, vita.*

† *Quam malè nobis convenit, nunc de ventre, nunc de capite,* &c. *hoc contingere ſolet in alieno habitantibus.* Sen.

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this Part, ſome of that, and the ſame Party ſometimes of one Malady, ſometimes of another; what Diſappointments and Diſgraces, and croſs Encounters of Affairs; what perſonal and what publick Calamities, and then Sin the worſt of all; and yet all cannot wean us. We cannot endure to hear nor think of removing; and the true Reaſon is, Unbelief of this eternal Life, and the Neglect of thoſe Ways that lead to it. Be perſuaded at length to call in your Heart from the fooliſh Chace of Vanity, and conſider this glorious Life that is ſet before you. Do you think the Proviſion you make for this wretched preſent Life worth ſo many Hours daily Pains, and give eternal Life ſcarce half a Thought in many Hours, poſſibly not a fixed ſerious Thought in many Days? ſure if you believe there is ſuch a thing, you cannot but be convinced, that it is a moſt prepoſterous unwiſe Courſe you take, in the Expence of your Time and Pains upon any thing elſe more than on Life eternal. Think what a ſad thing it will be, think you, when your Soul muſt remove out of that little Cottage wherein it now dwells, not to be better'd by the Removal, but thruſt out into utter Darkneſs; whereas, if ye would give up with Sin, and embrace Jeſus Chriſt as your Joy and your Life, in him you would preſently be put into a ſure unfailing Right to this eternal Life; it is a pure Life, and Purity of Life here, is the only Way to it. *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God.*

AN EXPOSITION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER.

MATTH. VI. 9.

After this Manner therefore pray ye.

THE Malice and Slight of Satan, in Reference to good Actions, works firſt in attempting wholly to divert us from them; but if that take not, the next is, to pervert their Uſe, and corrupt them ſo in doing, that they loſe their Acceptance with God, and we conſequently loſe the Fruit and Comfort of them. And as there is no religious Exerciſe that he hath more Quarrel at, and owes greater Enmity to, than Prayer, being the moſt conſtant Croſſer of his Deſigns, there is none from which he more endeavours to eſtrange Men, either wholly to lay it down, or to frequent Ceſſations; or if that cannot be, but that the Light of Conſcience ſtill calls for ſomewhat at leaſt that may paſs with a Man for Prayer, yet if Satan can get it turned to Hypocriſy and Formality, he knows he needs not fear it, for ſo it wants the Life of Prayer, and remains nothing but a dead Carcaſe, and therefore can neither pleaſe the living God, nor hurt him who is its Enemy.

Therefore our Saviour here warns his Diſciples to avoid, in praying, theſe two Evils, *the vain Oſtentation of Hypocrites*, v. 5. and *the vain Repetition of the*

the Heathen, v. 7. not to think it Prayer to tumble out a Multitude of empty Words: And upon that takes Occaſion to ſet this matchleſs Copy of Prayer, the Way of Example being the ſhorteſt and livelieſt Way of teaching. Theſe Words that are but the Entry, are not to be paſt; there is in them, 1. The Duty of Prayer ſuppoſed. 2. The preſcribing of this Form. 1. *Pray.* 2. *After this Manner.*

The Uſe and Neceſſity of Prayer is taken for confeſt, as before, *Ver.* vi. 7. *When ye pray*, and *when thou prayeſt.* And the Conſideration of this Exerciſe, and of this Pattern of it, is with good Reaſon accounted among the moſt neceſſary Principles of Religion; without it indeed all Religion withers and languiſhes. The Law of God is ſo pure and exact a Rule, that we cannot come near the Perfection of it, and therefore fall under its Curſe. When we underſtand it ſo, that drives us to the Goſpel, to ſeek Salvation there; and the Articles of the Goſpel, of our Chriſtian Faith, are ſo high and myſterious, that Nature cannot aright underſtand or believe them; and therefore both Law and Goſpel drive us to Prayer, to ſeek of God renewing Grace to conform our Hearts in ſome Meaſure to the holy Law of God, and Faith to lay hold on Jeſus Chriſt, and Salvation in him held forth to us in the Goſpel. Prayer is not taken in its ſtrict grammatical Senſe, in which the Words uſed for it ſignify only Petition or Requeſt; but as comprehending together with Petition, Confeſſion and Thankſgiving, may be called briefly and plainly a *pious Invocation of God*; and not ſpeaking abſtractly of Prayer, but according to the Eſtate of fallen Man, it is very fit to add the expreſs Mention of the Mediator, that is an Invocation of God in the Name of Chriſt; for it never aſcends to God as pleaſing Incenſe, but when it paſſeth through that golden Cenſer, and is perfum'd with the ſweet Odours

of his Merits and Interceſſion. His Entrance into Heaven hath opened up the Way for our Prayers to come in, and there is no Acceſs to the Throne of Grace, but by *that new and living Way*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. But how much better is the frequent Practice than much Diſcourſe, and Buſineſs in defining it; whatſoever is ſaid aright in this, is for the other as its End, as *Gerſon* hath it out of an ancient Philoſopher, *Inquirimus quid ſit virtus, non ut ſciamus, ſed ut boni efficiamur. We enquire what Virtues are, not to know them, but to have them.* And indeed to do otherwiſe is but anſwerable Employment to ſtudy the Nature of Riches, and talk of them, and remain poor, poſſeſſing none.

It is not needful to ſtay upon diſtinguiſhing Prayer, by the different Matter of Petitions, or things to be requeſted, which poſſibly ſome of the different Names of Prayer in Scripture do ſignify. This may ſuffice, that it be of ſuch things as are conform to the Will and Promiſes of God, and deſired with a ſuitable Diſpoſition of Mind, and therefore I call it *a pious Invocation.* It is the higheſt Impudence to preſent God with unjuſt or frivolous Deſires, *& quæ ſcire homines nolunt Deo narrant*, Sen. We ought to reverence the Majeſty of God, and regard that in our Requeſts. There is a Difference betwixt ſolemn Prayer, and ſudden Ejaculations, but it is not a Difference in their Nature, but only in Continuance; the former is here meant, therefore of it, *&c.* Only this of the other, it is to be wiſhed that it were more known, and more in Uſe with Chriſtians, for it is (no doubt) a very happy Means of preſerving the Heart in holy Temper, and conſtant Regard of God in all a Man's Actions, and is a main Point of anſwering the Apoſtle's Word, *pray continually*; when in company, and apart a Man uſeth ſecret ſhort Motions of the Soul to God, that may be very frequent

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in the Day, and Night, whereas Mens Callings, and natural Neceſſities, and Employments allow them but ſome certain Parcel of both for ſolemn Prayer; and theſe frequent Looks of the Heart to Heaven exceedingly ſweeten and ſanctify our other Employments, and diffuſe ſomewhat of Heaven through all our Actions. Solemn Prayer at fit times is a viſiting of God, but this were a conſtant walking with him all the Day long, lodging with him in the Night, *When I awake*, ſays *David*, *I am ſtill with thee.* And theſe ſudden Dartings of the Soul Heaven-wards, may ſometimes have more Swiftneſs and Force than larger Supplications, having much Spirit, as it were, contracted into them; and they would no doubt, if uſed, be anſwered with frequent Beams of God's Countenance returned to the Soul, as it were in Exchange; for though whole Lifetimes of Prayer are not worthy the leaſt of thoſe, yet it pleaſes God thus to keep Intercourſe with theſe Souls that love him, and for the Ejaculations of their Deſires to him, looks back on them, and ſo they interchange as it were ſudden Glances of Love that anſwer one another. The Lord is pleaſed to ſpeak thus himſelf, and the Souls that know this Love, underſtand it, *Thou haſt raviſh'd my Heart, my Siſter, my Spouſe, with one of thine Eyes.* But though ſuch Looks in Ejaculation will refreſh a Soul inflam'd with the Love of God, yet it ſuffices not, they muſt have Times of larger and more ſecret Converſe with their beloved, and particularly in the Exerciſe of ſolemn continued Prayer, and if cut ſhort of it at any time, will miſs it as much, as an healthful Body its accuſtomed Repaſte.

But it would ſeem, that though there may be ſome Reaſon for Confeſſion and Thankſgiving, yet that which hath moſt peculiarly the Name of Prayer, Petition, is ſuperfluous: He that knows our Wants better

better than ourſelves, and what is fitteſt to beſtow upon us, and forgets not at all, what need we put him in mind, and follow him with ſo many Suits?

This indeed is a ſtrong Reaſon againſt vain Babblings in Prayer, and imagining to be heard merely for long Continuance, and Multitude of Words; and our Saviour himſelf doth here uſe it ſo, *Ver.* 8. but withal he ſhews us clearly, that it makes nothing againſt the Exerciſe of Prayer, in that he adds immediately upon theſe Words, *After this Manner therefore pray ye.*

Although the Lord knows well our Wants, and doth according to his own good Pleaſure, yet there is for Prayer, 1. *Duty.* 2. *Dignity.* 3. *Utility.*

1. *Duty.* We owe this Homage to God, not only to worſhip him, but particularly to offer up our Supplications, and to acknowledge him our King, and Ruler of the whole World, and to teſtify our Dependence upon him, as the Giver of every good Gift; it is not becauſe he is unwilling, and loth to give, *For he gives liberally, and upbraids none*, yet ſays the Apoſtle there, *If any Man lack Wiſdom, let him ask it.* So of all Wants, that which Thankſgiving doth acknowledge after Receipt, Supplication doth beforehand; his Power, and Truth, and Goodneſs, *&c.* this is his ſtill, the God that *heareth Prayer*, and therefore this Homage is due to him, *To him ſhall all Fleſh come.*

2. *Dignity.* This is the Honour of the Saints, that they are admitted to ſo near and frequent Converſe with the great God, that they do not only expect from him, but may ſo freely ſpeak to him of their Deſires and Wants, and may pour out their Complaints into his Boſom. *Abraham* is ſenſible of the Greatneſs of this Privilege, by reflecting upon the Greatneſs of his Diſtance: It is an unſpeakable Honour

Honour for Duſt and Aſhes to be received into ſuch Familiarity with the Lord of Heaven and Earth.

3. *Utility.* It quiets and eaſes the Heart when it is troubled to vent itſelf to God, as there is ſome natural Eaſe in Sighs and Tears; (for otherwiſe Nature ſhould not have been furniſhed with them, nor teach us to uſe them;) they diſcharge ſome Part of Grief, though addreſs'd no whither, but only let out, more when it is in the Preſence of ſome entire Friend; ſo that they muſt be moſt of all eaſing, when they are directed to God in Prayer*. *Mine Eye poureth forth Tears unto God*, ſays *Job*; and *David*, *My Sighing is not hid from thee. Caſt thy Burden on the Lord*, ſays the Pſalmiſt. The Lord calls for our Burdens, would not have us wreſtle with them ourſelves, but roll them over on him. Now the Deſires that are breathed forth in Prayer are, as it were, the very unloading of the Heart; each Requeſt that goes forth, carries out ſomewhat of the Burden with it, and lays it on God. *Be careful in nothing*, ſays the Apoſtle: That were a pleaſant Life indeed, if it might be; but how ſhall that be attain'd? Why, this is the only Way, ſays he, *In all Things make your Requeſts known unto God:* Tell him what are your Deſires, and leave them there with him, and ſo you are ſure to be rid of all further diſquieting Care of them; try as many Ways as you will, there is no other will free you in Difficulties of all perplexing Thoughts but this, and this will do it.

2. In it the Graces of the Spirit are exerciſed, and they gain by that, as all Habits do. They are ſtrengthened and increaſed by acting Faith, in believing the Promiſes: And that is the very Baſis of Prayer; it cannot ſubſiſt without the Support of Faith. And Hope is raiſed up and ſet on Tip-toe,

ἀπο-

* *Cor ſerenat & purgat oratio, capaciuſque efficit ad excipienda divina munera*, S. Aug.

ἀπαραδοκῆν, to look out for Accompliſhment, and love it, is that which delights it, to impart its Mind to him on whom it is ſet, and thus to entertain Converſe and Conference with him: And all Hours ſeem ſhort to it that are thus ſpent; and by this it ſtill riſes to a higher Flame, it is blown and ſtirred by Prayer. The more the Soul converſes with God, doubtleſs the more it loves him.

And this ſpeaking your Deſires to God in Prayer, makes the Heart ſtill more holy, invites it to entertain new Deſires, but ſuch as it may confidently acquaint God withal.

In relation to the particular Things deſired, it not only fits and diſpoſes the Heart for receiving them as Bleſſings, but withal it is a real Means of Obtainment, by reaſon of God's own Appointment, and of his Promiſe. He hath bound himſelf by his Promiſes, not to diſregard the Prayers of his People: *His Ear is open to their Cry*, ſays the Pſalmiſt; and the many Inſtances in Scripture, and Experience of the Church in all Ages, bear Witneſs to the Truth of theſe Promiſes. Imminent Judgments averted, great Armies conquered, and the very Courſe of Nature countermanded, the Sun arreſted, by the Power of Prayer. *Moſes*'s Hands only held up to Heaven, routed the *Amalekites* more than all the Swords that were drawn againſt them *.

The Goodneſs of God is expreſt in his Promiſes; and theſe Promiſes encourage Prayer, and Prayer is anſwered with Performance, and Thankſgiving returns the Performance in Praiſe to God, *Pſal.* l. 15. So all ends where it began, in him who is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and End of all Things.

If you would be rich in all Grace, be much in Prayer. Converſing with God aſſimilates the Soul to

* In *Aurelius* his Time the Legion of the Chriſtians is called Κεραυνοβόλος.

to him, beautifies it with the Beams of his Holineſs, as *Moſes*'s Face ſhined when he returned from the Mount. It is Prayer that brings all our Supplies from Heaven, (as that Woman, *Prov.* xxxi. 14.) draws more Grace out of God's Hand, and ſubdues Sin and the Powers of Darkneſs; it entertains and augments our Friendſhip with God, raiſeth the Soul from Earth, and purifies it wonderfully. Their Experience, that have any of this kind, teacheth them, that as they abate in Prayer, all their Graces do ſenſibly weaken: Therefore when the Apoſtle hath ſuited a Chriſtian with his whole Armour, he adds this to all, *pray continually*; for this arms Man and his Armour both with the Strength and Protection of God, *armatura armaturæ oratio.*

After this Manner.

They that know any thing of their own Wants and Poverty, and of the Bounty and Fulneſs of God, cannot doubt of the continual Uſefulneſs of Prayer; and they that are ſenſible of their own Unskilfulneſs, will acknowledge, that as Prayer is neceſſary, ſo there is Neceſſity of a Direction how to perform it. The Diſciples found this in themſelves, when they ſaid, *Lord teach us to pray*, as St. *Luke* hath it, where he records this Prayer. And our Saviour here marks the Errors of Hypocriſy and babbling in Prayer that are ſo incident to Men, and teacheth his Diſciples, *After this Manner therefore pray ye.*

As for preſcribing Forms of Prayer in general, to be bound to their continual Uſe in private or publick, is no where practiſed. Nor is there, I conceive, on the other Side, any thing in the Word of God, or any ſolid Reaſon drawn from the Word, to condemn their Uſe.

There is indeed that Inconvenience obſervable in their much Uſe, and leaning on them, that they eaſily turn to Coldneſs and Formality; and yet, to

ſpeak the Truth of this, it is rather imputable to our Dulneſs, and want of Affection in ſpiritual Things, than to the Forms of Prayer that are uſed. For whereas ſome may account it much Spiritualneſs to deſpiſe what they have heard before, and to deſire continual Variety in Prayer, it ſeems rather to be want of Spiritualneſs that makes that needful, for that we find not our Affections lively in that holy Exerciſe, unleſs they be awaked and ſtirred by new Expreſſions: Whereas the Soul that is earneſt on the Thing itſelf for itſelf, panting after the Grace of God, and the Pardon of Sin, regards not in what Terms it be uttered, whether new or old; yea, tho' it be in thoſe Words it hath heard and uttered a hundred times, yet ſtill it is new to a ſpiritual Mind. And ſure the Deſires that do move in that conſtant Way, have more Evidence of Sincerity and true Vigour in them, than thoſe that depend upon new Notions and Words to move them, and cannot ſtir without them. It may be it is no other but a falſe Flaſh of temporary Devotion that ariſes in a Man's Heart, which comes by the Power of ſome moving Strain of Prayer that is new. But when Confeſſions of Sin, and Requeſts of Pardon, though in never ſo low and accuſtomed Terms, carry his Heart along with them Heavenwards, it is then more ſure that the Spirit of God dwelling in him, and the Senſe of the Things themſelves, the Eſteem of the Blood of Chriſt, and the Favour of God, do move the Heart, when there is no Novelty of Words to help it. So then, though the Lord beſtows rich Gifts upon ſome of his Servants, for his Glory and the Good of his Church; yet we ſhould beware, that in fancying continual Variety in Prayer, there be not more of the Fleſh than of the Spirit, and the Head working more than the Heart. It is remarkable that (as they that ſearch thoſe Things obſerve) the Words of this

Prayer

Prayer are divers of them ſuch, as come near the Words of ſuch Petitions as were uſual among the *Jews*, though he, in whom was all Fulneſs and Wiſdom, was not ſcarce of Matter and Words; ſo little was Novelty and Variety conſiderable in Prayer in his Eſteem. Miſtake it not, the Spirit of Prayer hath not his Seat in the Invention, but in the Affection. In this many deceive themſelves, in that they think the Work of this Spirit of Prayer to be mainly in furniſhing new Supplies of Thoughts and Words; no, it is mainly in exciting the Heart anew at Times of Prayer, to break forth itſelf in ardent Deſires to God, whatſoever the Words be, whether new or old, yea poſſibly without Words; and then moſt powerful when it words it leaſt, but vents in Sighs and Groans that cannot be expreſt. Our Lord underſtands the Language of theſe perfectly, and likes it beſt; he knows and approves the Meaning of his own Spirit, looks not to the outward Appearance, the Shell of Words, as Men do.

But to ſpeak particularly of this Form that is above all Exception; it is given us as the Pattern and Model of all our Prayers, and the cloſer they keep to it, the nearer they reſemble, they are the more approvable. It is a Wonder then how any can ſcruple the Uſe of this Prayer itſelf: For if other Prayers are to be ſquared by it, what forbids to uſe that which is the Square, and therefore perfecteſt? If they be good by Conformity to it, itſelf muſt be better. The mumbling it over without Underſtanding and Affection, is indeed no other but a groſs Abuſe of it, and taking of the Name of God in vain, as all other lifeleſs Prayer is. And this is not only the Popiſh Abuſe of it, but too much our own; for when we do not both underſtand, and attentively mind what we ſay, it is all one to us, though in our own Tongue, as if with them we ſaid it in an un-

known Language. It is a fooliſh ſuperſtitious Conceit, to imagine that the rattling over theſe Words is ſufficient for Prayer; but it is, on the other Side, a weak groundleſs Scruple, to doubt that the Uſe of it, with ſpiritual Affection, is both lawful and commendable.

Οὗ ος.] It is a Particle both for the *Matter* and *Manner* of Prayer.

1. *The Matter.*

This may be our Rule, that whatſoever we cannot reduce to ſome part of this Prayer, as contain'd under it, ſhould be no part of ours. If we take not heed to this, we may abuſe the Throne of God with undue and unworthy Suits, and ask thoſe Things that it were a Puniſhment to give us: Therefore *Plato* chuſed well that Word, *Give us what is good for us, whether we ask it or not; and what is evil give us not, though we ſhould deſire it.* Not to ſpeak now particularly, we ſee in the Matter of this Prayer in general, that ſpiritual Things are to be the Main of all our Prayers; and in Things temporal, not to lodge ſuperfluous inordinate Deſires, but in a moderate Uſe to ſeek Things neceſſary.

2. For the *Manner*: Obſerve, 1. The Order of this Prayer, that the Soul put itſelf in the Sight of God, and him in its own Sight, beginning as here with due Thoughts of the Majeſty of God, to whom we pray; and this is of very great Conſequence: But more of this hereafter. 2. That the Glory of God is wholly preferred to all our own Contentment of what Kind ſoever, that is to be the Firſt-born and Strength of all our Deſires, and all that we ſeek for ourſelves muſt be in Relation to that his Glory, directed to it as our higheſt Scope. And becauſe we are naturally full of Self-love, and our Hearts are carried by it towards our own Intereſt, and therefore will be ready to ſtart aſide like deceitful Bows, and

ſlip us in our aiming at that Mark, therefore there be three ſeveral Petitions, all of that Strain, to make them ſteady and fixed towards it, to deſire in all things, and above all things, that our God may be glorified.

3. *Brevity*, oppoſed to that Babling which our Saviour reproves and particularly corrects by this Form; that Fault he lays on the Heathen, not upon the *Jews*, for they blamed it too, and their Doctors ſpake againſt it, alledging that Place that is very pertinent, *Eccl.* v. 2. where he argues from our exceeding Diſtance and the Greatneſs of God, becauſe Men uſe not to entertain great Perſons with long empty Diſcourſes. Know then before whom thou art in Prayer, and have ſo much reſpect to the Majeſty of God, as not to multiply idle Repetitions, ſuch as wiſe Men cannot well endure, how much leſs the all-wiſe God. Βαττολογία and πολυλογία are here put as one, becauſe the one is the conſequent of the other; where there is much ſpeaking, there will be vain ſpeaking and empty Repetitions *. *In multitude of Words there wanteth not Sin*, ſays *Solomon*; and we ſee it, that they that lay a Neceſſity upon themſelves of a long Continuance and many Words in Prayer, as if it were otherwiſe no Prayer at all, they fall into this Inconvenience of idle repeating; and this is moſt unbeſeeming our Acceſs to the Majeſty of God, as if there were ſome Defect either in his Knowledge, or in his Attention, or Affection to thoſe that ſeek him. Therefore, though this was the common Fault of the Heathen, yet ſome even of them had ſo much diſcerning as to condemn this Folly, and inveigh againſt it †, acknowledging both the Wiſdom of God, and his Love to Mankind, and that he underſtands far better what is fit for us, than we ourſelves, and

* Χρεὶς τὸ τ' εἰπεῖν πόλλα κ᾽ τὰ κήδεια. Soph.
† *Paucis verbis rem divinam facito.* Pl.

and therefore was not to be diſhonoured with idle Tedioufneſs in Prayer.

But is then all Length and much Continuance in Prayer, and all redoubling of the ſame Requeſt reprovable? ſurely no. Were there nothing elſe to perſuade us of this, our Saviour's own Practice were ſufficient, who preſcrib'd this Rule, and yet is found to have ſpent whole Nights in Prayer, and to have iterated the ſame Requeſt; and doubtleſs (which can be ſaid of no other) his Example is as perfect a Rule as his Doctrine.

This then briefly is the Fault here, when the long Continuance, and much Repetition in Prayer is affected as a thing of itſelf available, when heaping on Words, and beating often over the ſame Words, though the Heart bear them not Company, is judged to be Prayer; and generally whenſoever the Tongue outruns the Affection, then is Prayer turned into Babbling. Yea though a Man uſe this very ſhort Form here preſcribed, yet he may commit this very Fault againſt which it was provided, he may babble in ſaying it; and it is to be feared the greateſt Part do ſo. Men judge (and that rightly) a Speech to be long or ſhort, not ſo much by the Quantity of Words, as by the Senſe; ſo that a very ſhort Speech that is empty of Senſe may be called long, and a long one that is full, and hath nothing impertinent, is truly ſhort *: Thus as Men judge by the Senſe of Speech, God judgeth by the Affection of Prayer, that is the true Senſe of it, ſo the Quality is the Rule of the Quantity with him. There is no Prayer too long to him, provided it be all enlivened with Affection; no idle Repetition where the Heart ſays every Word over again as often and more often than the Tongue. There-

* *Abſit ut multiloquium deputem, quando neceſſaria dicuntur, quantâlibet ſermonum multitudine ac prolixitate dicantur. Brevitas eſt etiam in longiſſimâ oratione, cui nihil noſt alieni.*

Therefore thoſe Repetitions in the *Pſalms*; *Lord hear*, *Lord incline thine Ear*, *Lord attend*, &c. were not idle on this Account; God's own Spirit did dictate them, there was not one of them empty, but came from the Heart of the holy Pen-men, full fraught with the Vehemency of their Affections. And it is reported of St. *Auguſtin*, that he prayed over for a whole Night, *Noverim te*, *domine*, *noverim me:* Becauſe his Heart ſtill followed the Suit, all of it was Prayer. So that in Truth, where the Matter is new, and the Words ſtill diverſe, and very rich in Senſe, yet with God it may be idle multiplying of Words, becauſe the Heart ſtays behind; and where the ſame Words are repeated, that a Man ſeems poor and mean in the Gift of Prayer to others, yet if it be not Defect of Affection, but Abundance of it (as it may be) that moves often the ſame Requeſt, it is not empty, but full of that Senſe that the Searcher of Hearts alone can read. I had rather ſhare with that *Publican* in his own Words, and ſay it often over, as if I had nothing elſe to ſay, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, ſaying it with ſuch a Heart, than the moſt excellent Prayer where the outſide is the better Half.

So then this is the Miſtake of Men, to think to make Words paſs for Prayer with God, and to make up what is wanting inwardly, with multitude of Words and long Continuance; a fooliſh Compenſation, that will no way ſatisfy him that ſays, above all, *my Son*, *give me thy Heart*; and no Length nor Words can ſupply the Want of that with him. Yet many do thus, they give large Meaſure of that which is altogether worth nothing; as the Orator ſaid of thoſe that make a poor Speech paſs for ſomething, with crying it out with a loud Voice, *that they were like to thoſe Cripples that got a Horſeback to hide their halting.* It is thus here, and the Church of *Rome* hath it for their common Shift, they have ſhut out the Heart

Heart out of this Employment, where it hath moſt Intereſt, by praying in an unknown Tongue; and this Defect they make up with long Continuance, and Repetition of *Pater-noſters*, with a Devotion as cold and dead as the Beads they drop. And ſo they with their Breviaries, notwithſtanding of their Name, fall directly into this fooliſh heatheniſh Vanity of idle Length and Repetitions.

Thus do we too, though we ſpeak our own known Language, when either in ſecret or in publick we ſuffer our Hearts to rove in Prayer, and hear not ourſelves what we are praying, how then can we expect that God ſhould hear us?

If the Affection can be brought to continue in it, Prayer in ſecret cannot be too long: But let us not think it Virtue enough that it is long, let it rather be brief with ſtrong Bent of Mind, than long without it *; as a ſmall Body ſtrong and full of Spirits, is much better than the greateſt Bulk that is dull and ſpiritleſs. And when we pray in Company, becauſe Men cannot know the Temper of other Mens Hearts, uſually a convenient Mids betwixt Extreams, *viz.* Briefneſs and Length, ſeems moſt ſuitable.

But, alas! how few be there that keep conſtant Watch over their Affections in Prayer, and endeavour to keep the Heart bent to it throughout? Oh! how much Sin is committed by us this Way that we obſerve not?

This is a great Leſſon, and requires ſtill our Diligence, even all our Lifetime, to learn it better and better, how to pray.

We have here indeed a compleat Copy, but we cannot follow it; he that ſet it us muſt put his Spirit within us, to lead our Hand and Heart that we may

* *Non eſt (ut quidam putant) orare in multiloquio, ſi diutius oretur, aliud eſt ſermo multus, aliud diuturnus affectus. Abſit multa loquutio, ſed non deſit multa precatio.* Aug.

may follow it, as he here ſhews, how we ſhould pray. We are not born with this Art, *ſimus oratores*, and I may add the other Word, true of us, in regard of our Vanity of Mind, and the Devices that ariſe in it, *naſcimur poetæ. Omnis fictio cordis*, &c. *Gen.* vi. 5. *Eccl.* vii. *ult.* We muſt have that Spirit of his, the Spirit of Prayer, to teach us effectually, and make us learn this divine Art of Prayer, according to his Rules. Although we are thus externally taught by our Saviour's Doctrine, yet unleſs we be taught within by the Spirit, we are never the nearer, we know neither what to ask, nor how to ask; but that is a happy Supply, and they may rejoice in it that have it, the Spirit of God *helping their Infirmities, and making Interceſſion for them:* How ſhould they but ſpeed in their Suits with God, that have both his own Spirit interceeding, by framing and inditing their Petitions, and his own Son interceeding at his Right Hand by his Merits?

Our Father.]

He that follows me (ſays our Saviour) *ſhall not walk in Darkneſs.* 'Tis our ſafeſt in all our Ways to be led by him, particularly in our Acceſs to the Father by Prayer; he leads us in by his Interceſſion, through him we have εισαγωγὴν, *Acceſs*, or rather *Adduction*, takes us by the Hand to bring us to the Throne of Grace, gives us his Spirit to frame our Minds, and teach us with what Diſpoſition to pray. Here he leads us, by putting Words in our Mouths, and furniſhing us what to ſay.

1. The Preface or Compellation.
2. The Petitions.
3. The Concluſion.

1. By the Preface we are in general taught this, (e're we conſider particularly the Words of it;) 1. To endeavour to have right Thoughts and Apprehenſions of God, on whom we call. 2. At our

Entry or Beginning to pray, to ſet ourſelves before him, and him before our own Sight, to have the Eye of our Mind ſet on that Deity we worſhip. This would do much to the curing that common Diſeaſe of our Prayers, the wandring and roving of our Minds; an Evil that they cannot but be ſenſible of, and often bewail, that take any Notice of their own inward Carriage with God, that trace their own Hearts, and ask Account of their Behaviour in Prayer *. Oh! light inconſtant Hearts! (may they ſay) as the *Latin* reads that, *Pſal.* xl. *Cor meum dereliquit me.* How many regard them not at all? But they that do, find it their ordinary Trick to give them the Slip. And this is one great Cauſe of our Wanderings, that we do not, at our Entrance to Prayer, compoſe ourſelves to due Thoughts of God, and to ſet ourſelves in his Preſence; this would do much to awe us, and baläſt our Minds, that they tumble not to and fro, as is their Cuſtom. There be not many that do, but it would prove no doubt much Help, would we task ourſelves to this, never to open our Mouths to God, till the Eye of our Soul were fix'd upon him, and taken up with conſidering of his Preſence. But of this more when we come to theſe Words, *Who art in Heaven.*

Our Father which art in Heaven.] *Our Father*; the Mercy of God is in this, to beget in us the Confidence of Faith: In the other, *which art in Heaven*; the Majeſty of God to work us to Reverence: Tho' there is ſomewhat in the Word *Father* likewiſe to perſuade Reverence, and ſomething in the other that confirms Faith; but more of this hereafter; yet if we take that which appears moſt, and is predominant, the former mainly ſupports Faith, and the latter begets Humility.

The Frame of it is extenſive; not *My Father*, but *Our*

* *Nihil eſt in nobis corde fugacius.* Greg.

Our Father, and ſo throughout; beſides that it was a Pattern both for publick and private Prayer, and ſo it was fitteſt to run in the larger and publick Stile. It doth no doubt (as all have taken it) teach the charitable Extenſion of our Prayers, where they are moſt private, to take in with our own the Good of others, and when we are buſieſt and moſt particularly dealing for ourſelves, yet not to ſhut out our Brethren. Let the Place and Performance of ſecret Prayer be as private as may be, but the Strain and Suits publick, as well as perſonal. The privateſt Prayer of the Godly is a publick Good, and he loſes nothing by that; for, beſides that his Particular is not hindred by taking in others, he hath this Gain, that by the ſame Reaſon he likewiſe hath a Share in all the Prayers of others. And this (though little conſidered by the moſt) is one Point, and not a ſmall one, but a very profitable and comfortable Point of that Article of our Faith, *The Communion of Saints*, that every Believer hath a Share in all the Prayers of all the reſt; he is Partner in every Ship of that kind that ſets to Sea, and hath a Portion of all their gainful Voyages.

But he that in Prayer minds none but himſelf, doubtleſs he is not right in minding himſelf; howſoever this he may be ſure of, that in keeping out others from his Prayers, he bars himſelf from the Benefit of all others Prayers likewiſe. *Si pro te ſolo oras, pro te ſolus oras.* S. *Ambr.* So that Self-love itſelf may here plead for Love to our Brethren. Forget not the Church of God, and to ſeek the Good of *Zion*; it is not only your Duty, but your Benefit. Are you not all concerned in it? If indeed you be Parts of that myſtical Body: And it hinders not at all, but rather advances your perſonal Suits at God's Hands, when he ſees your Love to your Brethren, and Deſires for the Church's Good. Let not there-

fore any Eſtate, no private Perplexity or Diſtreſs, nor very Sorrow for Sin, take you ſo up, as to be all for yourſelves; let others, but eſpecially the publick Condition of the Church of God, find Room with you. We find it thus with *David*, when he was lamenting his own Caſe, *Pſal.* li. and *Pſal.* xxv. *ult.* and elſewhere; yet he forgets not the Church, *In thy good Pleaſure do good to* Zion, *and build up the Walls of* Jeruſalem. So then let this be the conſtant Tenor of your Prayers, even in ſecret: When thou prayeſt alone, *ſhut thy Door*, ſays our Saviour here; ſhut out as much as thou canſt the Sight and Notice of others, but ſhut not out the Intereſt and Good of others, ſay *Our Father*, as the Heathen call their God, Ζεῦ Πάτερ, &c.

Father.] He is indeed our Father, * as the Author of our Being, beyond all the viſible Creatures; he breathed upon Man the Breath of Life. But the Privilege of this our natural Relation, the Sin of our Nature hath made fruitleſs and comfortleſs to us, till we be reſtored by Grace, and made Partakers of a new Sonſhip: We are indeed the Workmanſhip of God, but being defac'd by Sin, and conſidered in that Eſtate, our true Name is *Children of Wrath.*

But the Sonſhip that emboldens us to draw near unto God as our Father, is derived from his only begotten Son. He became the Son of Man, to make us anew the Sons of God. Being thus reſtored, we may indeed look back upon our Creation, and draw out of it to uſe in Prayer with God, that we are his Creatures, the Workmanſhip of his Hands, and he in that Senſe *our Father.* But by reaſon of our Rebellion, this Argument is not ſtrong enough alone, but muſt be ſupported with this other, as the main Ground of our Comfort, that wherein the Strength of

* Τοῦ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν. Act. xvii.

of our Confidence lies, that he *is our Father in his Son Chriſt*; that by Faith we are inveſted into a new Sonſhip, and by virtue of that may call him *Father*, and move him by that Name to help and anſwer us, *Joh.* i. 12. *To as many as received him, he gave Power to become the Sons of God.* Our Adoption holds in Jeſus Chriſt as the Head of this Fraternity; therefore he ſays, *I go to my Father, and your Father, to my God, and your God.* He ſays not, to our Father and our God, but ſeverally, *mine* and *yours*; teaching us the Order of the new Covenant, that the Sonſhip of Jeſus Chriſt is not only more eminent in Nature, but in Order, is the Spring and Cauſe of ours, as St. *Cyril* well obſerves †. So then he that here puts this Word in our Mouths, to call God *Father*, he it is by whom we have this Dignity and Comfort that we call him ſo.

But this Adoption is accompanied (that we think it not a naked external Name) with a real Change, and ſo great a Change, that it bears the Name of that which is the real Ground of Sonſhip, it is called *Regeneration.* And theſe are inſeparable, there be no Sons of God by *Adoption*, but ſuch as are withal his Sons by *Regeneration* and *new Birth:* There is a new Life breathed into them from God; he is not only the Father of Spirits, by their firſt Infuſion into the Body, and enlivening it by them, but by this new Infuſion of Grace into the Souls of Men (as it ſeems to ſignify there, *Heb.* xii. where he is ſpeaking of ſpiritual Sons) and enlivening them by it, which were dead without it, as the Body is without them; and the Spirit of God renewing them, is the *Spirit of Adoption, by which they cry, Abba Father.* He gives them a ſupernatural Life by this Spirit ſent into their Hearts, and the Spirit by that Regeneration which he works, aſcertains them of that Adoption which is in

† *Cyrill. Hieroſ. Catech.*

in Chriſt Jeſus, and in the Perſuaſion of both they call upon God as their Father.

So then you that would have this Confidence in approaching to God to call him Father, lay hold on Jeſus Chriſt as the Fountain of Sonſhip; offer not to come unto God, but through him, and reſt not ſatisfied with yourſelves, nor your Prayers, till you find ſome Evidence that you are in him. And know that there is no Evidence of your Portion in the Son, but by the Spirit; therefore called the *Spirit of the Son, by which we call God Father*, Gal. iv. See whether the Spirit of God dwells and rules in your Hearts; for *they that have not the Spirit of God are none of his*, ſays the Apoſtle; but in the ſame Chapter he aſſures you, that as *many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are undoubtedly the Sons of God.*

If you then call on the Name of God, and particularly by this Name, *your Father*, depart from Iniquity; be aſham'd to pretend to be his Sons, and yet be ſo unlike him, wallowing in Sin. It cannot be that the Sons of ſo holy a God, can be altogether unholy, and delight to be ſo; no, though they cannot be perfectly free from Impurity, yet they that are indeed his Children, do certainly hate Impurity, becauſe he hates it.

Do you draw near unto God in his Son Chriſt? Do you give yourſelves up to be led by his Spirit? then you may account, and call him *your Father*; and if you may uſe this Word, there is Abundance of Sweetneſs in it; it is a Spring of Comfort that cannot run dry, and it hath Influence into all the Petitions; as likewiſe the other Word, *which art in Heaven*; " thou that art ſo great and ſo good." Whoſe Name and whoſe Kingdom ſhould we deſire to be advanced ſo much as our own Father's, our heavenly Father? and his Will to be obeyed on Earth, as it is in Heaven. Of whom ſhould we ſeek our daily Bread,

Bread, but of our Father? and eſpecially ſo rich a Father, Poſſeſſor of Heaven and Earth; and Forgiveneſs of our gracious Father, and Conduct, and Protection. In the hardeſt Condition that can befal you, ye may come to your Father; all the World cannot bar your Acceſs: And there is no Child may go to his Father with any Suit with more Confidence, than you may to your Father: And if there be Mercy and Power enough in God, thou cannot miſs of Help; he hath the Bowels of a Father, *Pſal.* ciii. 13. yea, ſays our Saviour, *Can you that are evil give your Children good things, how much more will your heavenly Father*, &c. The Love of Parents to their Children they have from him; he hath given it to Nature, ſo it is but a Drop to the Ocean of fatherly Love that is in himſelf.* Let not then Unworthineſs ſcar his Children; Parents love their Children and do them Good, not becauſe they ſee they are more worthy than others, for it may be far otherwiſe, but becauſe they are their own.

Yea, though we have run aſtray from him, and forgot very far the Duty of Children, yet he cannot forget the Love of a Father; and our beſt is to return to him, it cannot be well with us ſo long as we go any whither elſe. The Prodigal found it ſo, and therefore though he was convinced of that, that he was unworthy to be called his Son, yet he reſolves to return, *I will go to my Father.* Yea, though to thy Senſe he ſhould ſeem to reject thee, yet let not go this Hold, if thou haſt but a Deſire to believe in him and love him, though thou canſt find no more, and even while thou doubteſt whether he is thy Father or no, yet preſs him with the Name, call him Father, ſpeak to him as thy Father; Jeſus his Son, in

* *Ante petitionem magnum accepimus, ut poſſimus dicere, pater, quid enim jam non det filiis petentibus pater, qui jam hoc ipſum dedit ut eſſent filii?* S. Aug.

in whom he is well pleaſed, doth warrant thee. *Though he ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him*, ſays *Job*: So reſolve thou, though thou ſaweſt his Hand, as it were ready to throw thee into Hell, yet cry to him ſtill, and uſe this very Name, *Father reject me not*; never any periſh'd with ſuch a Purpoſe.

Who art in Heaven.]

Serve the Lord with Fear, and rejoice with Trembling. This Compellation taken together, and rightly underſtood, works that due Temper of Prayer, the Mixture of theſe two, *Joy* and *Fear*, *Confidence* and *Reverence*. There was ſome ſuch thing ſpoke of *Auguſtus*, but it is moſt true of the Divine Majeſty, that they that dare ſpeak raſhly to him, know not his Greatneſs; and they that dare not ſpeak to him (provided it be with due Reverence and Reſpect) know not his Goodneſs.

That we all invocate one Father, teaches that new Law of Love one to another, which our Saviour, the Author of this Prayer, ſo often recommends, and makes the very Badge of his Diſciples. It ſerves to comfort the meaneſt, and to abate the Loftineſs of the greateſt that pray thus, as St. *Auguſtine* well obſerves, that they all meet and agree in this; the greateſt Kings, and their meaneſt Subjects, all muſt ſpeak to God as their Father, not only all alike having their Being from him as the Father of the Spirits of all Fleſh, but the ſame Adoption belonging unto all, high and low, that are Believers. All the Pomp and Command and Pleaſures of Princes, cannot make them happy without this Grace of Adoption; and no outward Baſeneſs prejudges any, but they may be happy by partaking of it. In this likewiſe is very clear our Leſſon of Love to God, becauſe our Father; for though (as they ſay) Love doth deſcend much more than it aſcends, and is here moſt of all verified, yet it doth aſcend from the

Children

Children to their Parents by way of Reflexion, eſpecially from the Sons of God to him as a Father, who is Love itſelf. And as this Name draws the Soul to the Throne of Grace with aſſured Expectation of Mercy, ſo it commands withal (as we ſaid) Honour and Reverence, eſpecially being accompanied with this other Word that mainly enforces that (ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς) *in the Heavens*, anſwering the *Hebrew* Word which is plural, and ſignifying that the glorious God is above all the viſible Heavens; and thus the profane Authors ſpeak of God likewiſe, ὑπέρτατα δώματα ναίων.

We know, although we are guilty of much forgetting it, that the Lord is every where preſent, neither excluded nor included any where; that he fills all Places, not as contain'd in them, but containing them, and upholding them, and all Things in them: But he is in Heaven after a ſpecial Manner, in the brighteſt Manifeſtation of himſelf, and the pureſt Service performed to him there. They cannot contain him, as *Solomon* expreſſes it, 1 *Kings* viii. 27. yet his Throne is there, there he dwells, as in his principal Palace, in greateſt Majeſty, as *David* teacheth us, *Pſal.* xi. 4. and often elſewhere. But that he is not ſhut up there, and regardleſs of Things below, we learn in that ſame Place; for he adds, *His Eyes behold, and his Eye-lids try the Children of Men.*

This is added, 1. For *Diſtinction*; as the Apoſtle differencing him from the Fathers of our Fleſh, calls him *the Father of Spirits*; ſo here, from earthly Fathers, *our heavenly Father.*

Obſerve. We cannot here know God according to what he is in himſelf, and therefore he is deſcribed to our Capacity, and to our Profit, ſo as we are able, and as it moſt concerns us to know him here, by his gracious Relation to us as our Father, and by the Excellency of his Dwelling, as a Sign of his

Greatneſs, that he is in Heaven, both which are extrinſical to his Eſſence: But thus we may learn thus much to worſhip and love him as the beſt and greateſt, infinitely exceeding all that we can conceive of him.

2. As it is for Diſtinction, ſo it is ſuch a Word of Difference as is of excellent Uſe.

1. To make the Soul humble and reverend in approaching to God in Prayer, if we conſider it; will we not be wary how we behave ourſelves in the Preſence of ſo great a King? It is very ſtrange that our Souls ſhould not be poſſeſt with the deepeſt Lowlineſs and Self-abaſement in the Sight of God; Worms in the Duſt, before the Majeſty that dwells in Heaven. This *Solomon* expreſſes, *He is in Heaven, and thou on Earth, therefore let thy Words be few.* What is this we find in ourſelves that makes us ſo drunk with Self-conceit, not only in Converſe one with another, but with God? Surely we know him not, at leaſt we conſider not who he is, and where he dwells, and who we are, and where we dwell. Surely it would lay us low, if, when we come before God, we would conſider him as the moſt glorious King ſitting on his Throne, and compaſs'd with glorious Spirits, that offer him ſpotleſs Praiſes, and we ourſelves coming before him, as baſe Frogs creeping out of our Pond, where we dwell amidſt the Mire of ſinful Pollutions.

Thus indeed his Highneſs ſhould humble us in coming, but it ſhould not affright us from coming before him; for though he is in Heaven, and we on Earth, yet he is our Father: Thus ought we to join theſe two, and behold them jointly, that we may have that right Poſture of Mind by them that ſuits with Prayer, *humble Boldneſs.*

There may be undue Diſtruſt, but there cannot be too much Humility of Spirit in Prayer: The more humble

humble, the fitter to come to God: And he the more willing to come into the Soul, and dwell in it; for that is the other Houſe that he hath choſen. They ſeem very ill ſuited together; if the higheſt Heavens be the Lord's one Dwelling, it would ſeem fit that the other ſhould be the richeſt Palaces on Earth, or ſtately built Temples. No, the other is ſuch a one as we moſt deſpiſe, but God prefers before other, even the moſt ſumptuous Building, *Iſa.* lvii. 15. *Thus ſaith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth Eternity, whoſe Name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy Place, with him alſo* (a ſtrange *alſo*) *that is of a broken and humble Spirit*, &c. The higheſt Heavens are the Habitation of his Glory, and the humble Heart hath the next Honour, to be the Habitation of his Grace.

2. As the Word humbles the Soul in God's Sight, ſo it elevates it to Heaven where God dwells, and fixes it there in Prayer; and this Elevation is not contrary to Humility: The Soul that is laid loweſt in itſelf, is moſt ſublime in Converſe with God. * And thus ought our Hearts to aſcend in Prayer, which, alas, we uſually ſuffer to lag and draw the Wing heavily on the Earth. *Unto thee, O Lord*, ſays the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xxv. *do I lift up my Soul*; that is the right and natural Motion of Prayer. But there is another lifting up, that our Souls are better acquainted with, which is ſpoken of in the Pſalm immediately foregoing, *That lifting up of the Soul unto Vanity*; and the more ſo lift up, the further off from God. O the Vainneſs of our Hearts! and how hard is it to eſtabliſh them on him that dwells on High? Even while we are ſpeaking to him, we ſuffer them to break looſe and rove, and to entertain fooliſh Thoughts: We would not uſe a King or great Perſon ſo, nor any Man whom we reſpect,

* *Sublimiter humilis & humiliter ſublimis.* S. Cypr.

when we are ſpeaking to him ſeriouſly, to intermit Impertinencies, and forget what we are a ſaying: But we dare offer groſs Nonſenſe to the All-wiſe God; though the Words go on in good Senſe, yet the Prayer is ſo to him, when the Heart intermixes vain Thoughts. *Polum terræ miſcet*, confuſes and ſpoils all. And this is the great Task (as we have ſaid) to bring the Heart before God, to ſet it on his holy Mountain in Heaven, while we pray, (it ſhould be ſo certainly) and leave ſervile earthly Thoughts at the Foot of the Mount.

3. It gives Confidence. 1. Of the Power of God, his rich Ability to grant all our Requeſts: He, that Lord of all, and as greateſt Poſſeſſor, hath his Throne in the higheſt Heavens, and doth what pleaſeth him in Heaven and in Earth; this, with the other, compleats our Comfort, *Good-will* and *Power*, *Our Father in Heaven.* And this we may apply to all our Wants for Aſſurance of Supply, and to all our Enemies, and the Church's Enemies, that our Prayer ſhall be heard for their Foil and Diſappointment. *He ſits in Heaven and laughs*, Pſal. ii. *They rage, and tumult, and conſult*, &c. A great Buſtle and Noiſe they keep, and he ſits and laughs at them; he ſcorns all their proud Attempts: For that with Eaſe he can ſcatter them in a Moment; one Word of his Mouth overturns them and all their Contrivances.

2. It is a Confirmation of our Portion in Heaven: If he, who is in Heaven, be our Father, then our Inheritance lies there, in that Land of Peace where it cannot be loſt or impaired, and he will bring his Children to the Poſſeſſion of it. To be the Sons of God is not a Stile without an Eſtate, an empty Title; no, he that makes us Sons, makes us Heirs likewiſe, *Sons we are in Chriſt*, and *Co-heirs with Chriſt.* He came down to Earth for this Purpoſe, to make a new Purchaſe of Heaven for us, and he is returned

thither

thither to prepare it for us. *I go to prepare a Place for you, that where I am, ye may be alſo.*

Hallowed be thy Name.]

The Senſe of many Wants and Neceſſities drives a Chriſtian daily to God in Prayer, yet certainly that which draws him moſt ſtrongly to it, is of a higher Nature. The Senſe of his Duty to God, and the Delight he hath to do that Homage and Honour to him; and therefore in Prayer the main Current of his Heart runs that Way, and ſo agrees with this Pattern given us by our Saviour: Wherein we ſee clearly that our prime Deſires are to be beſtowed on the Glory of God, and that not only placed firſt, as to be preferred before all other Suits, but to be regarded ſtill in all the reſt, and they all referred to it. And to make the Impreſſion of this Deſire the deeper on our Hearts, and to give the fuller Vent of it in Expreſſion to them that have it, there are, you ſee, three of theſe ſix Petitions ſpent on it; this is the firſt of them, *Hallowed be thy Name.* This ſuits well with the Stile here given to God, *Our Father. If I be a Father, where is my Honour?* ſays the Lord by his Prophet: And here his Children are taught to join theſe two together, thou art our Father, and ſo glorious a Father dwelling in Heaven; therefore our Deſire is, that thou mayeſt have Honour, that thy Name may be hallowed, and thy Kingdom come. We will enquire,

1. What is meant by his Name. 2. What is the hallowing or ſanctifying it. 3. What the Petition itſelf is.

Briefly, his Name is himſelf, as he is made known to us, and conceivable by us, and differenc'd from all other Beings, as Men are by their Names one from another; for to this Purpoſe are all theſe ſeveral Names and Attributes given him that we find in Scripture,

Scripture, that we may ſo conceive of himſelf as here we are capable.

2. To ſanctify his Name (we know) cannot be to infuſe Holineſs into it, or effectually to make it holy; for neither can we ſo make any thing holy, nor can the Name of God be ſo made holy, for it is moſt holy of itſelf, yea he is Holineſs itſelf, and the Fountain of all Holineſs; but according to the double Senſe of the Word *Bleſſing*, as mutual betwixt God and Man, ſo is this of ſanctifying. *Bleſſed be the God* (ſays the Apoſtle, *Eph.* i. 3.) *and Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath bleſſed us with all ſpiritual Bleſſings.* His *benedicere* is *benefacere*; he bleſſeth us really, as the Giver of all Bleſſings, and of Bleſſedneſs itſelf; and our bleſſing him is no other, but the acknowledging of this, that it is he that bleſſeth us, and praiſing him for it. Thus he ſanctifies us, makes us holy, purifies us by his Spirit from our natural Unholineſs and Filthineſs, according to his Promiſe, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 25. and according to our Saviour's Prayer, *Joh.* xvii. 17. and we ſanctify the Lord and his Name, (as here, and *Iſa.* viii. 13.) when we know and acknowledge that he is holy, and uſe his Name holily; and thus they only ſanctify, who affectionately pray thus, that his Name may be ſanctified, whoſe Hearts he hath firſt ſanctified and made them holy.

More particularly and diſtinctly, the ſanctifying of God's Name hath in it theſe things. 1. To have right Thoughts of the Holineſs and Majeſty of God. 2. That upon ſo conceiving of him, our Hearts be reverently affected towards him. 3. Not only to have that due Apprehenſion and Reverence of his Holineſs in the Habit, and ſo let it ly dead within us, but often to ſtir up ourſelves to the Remembrance and Conſideration of it, to call in our Thoughts to act about it; ſo this will increaſe our Knowledge

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and Reverence, (as all Habits grow by acting) and will excite the Soul to praiſe him, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, *Give Thanks at the Remembrance of his Holineſs.* 4. The declaring and extolling of his Holineſs, ſpeaking upon all ſeaſonable Occaſions honourably of his Name. 5. The humble Senſe and Acknowledgment of our own Unholineſs in his Preſence; and therefore all theſe lowly Confeſſions of Sins, and of their own Unworthineſs that we find in the Prayers of the Prophets, are ſo many Hallowings of the Name of God, giving the Glory of Holineſs to him alone, and taking with the Shame of their own Pollutions, thus *Dan.* ix. *Iſa.* lxiv. *&c.* As ſome of the *Americans* have a Cuſtom, when they appear before their King, to put on their worſt Apparel, that all the Magnificence may reſt upon him alone, and appear the better. Thus though the Majeſty of God, in itſelf being infinite, needs nothing elſe to commend it, yet to our Apprehenſion of it, it may be thus; and the Saints in Deſire of his Glory may intend this, to ſet off the Luſtre of his Purity and Excellency, in the humble Confeſſions of their own Vileneſs, *To thee, O Lord, belongeth Righteouſneſs, but to us Confuſion of Face.* 6. The hallowing of God's Name is an earneſt Endeavour of Conformity with him in Holineſs; firſt in Heart, that muſt be the principal Seat of it, and then Holineſs in all our Words and Actions, and the whole Courſe of our Lives. This is that which the Lord perpetually preſſes upon his People, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*; and this is the moſt effectual ſanctifying of his Name by way of declaring it holy, when his People walk in Holineſs. Though you tell the World, that he is holy, they know him not, they can neither ſee him nor his Holineſs; but when they ſee that there are Men taken out of the ſame Lump of polluted Nature with themſelves, and yet ſo renewed and chang-

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ed, that they hate the Defilements of the World, and do indeed live holily in the midſt of a perverſe Generation; this may convince them that there is a brighter Spring of Holineſs where it is in Fulneſs, from whence theſe Drops are that they perceive in Men; for ſeeing it is not in Nature, there muſt be another Principle of it, and that can be no other but this holy God; thus is his Name hallowed, and he known to be holy by the Holineſs of his People. So then the Petition takes in all, and in it we deſire the ſanctifying and magnifying of God's Name in every poſſible way. 1. By ourſelves, that we may mind his Glory, and by his Grace ſanctify his Name. 2. By others, that our Lord may be more known and honoured in the World; they would gladly have many Hearts and many Tongues brought in to confeſs the Lord, and his Holineſs and Greatneſs. Thus the *Pſalmiſt* ſtirs up the Angels to bleſs the Lord, *Pſal.* ciii. not that they need exciting, but to ſhew his own Affection to God's Praiſes. 3. And becauſe there is ſtill ſome Alloy and Mixture of Unholineſs, in all the hallowing of his Name here below, all our Services ſtained; therefore, as the Godly do in this Requeſt, wiſh all the exalting and ſanctifying of God's Name among Men, that is attainable here, ſo, I conceive, they do as it were applaud to thoſe purer Services and Praiſes that are given him above; and ſenſible how far they fall ſhort themſelves, they are glad to think that there be ſuch Multitudes of Angels, and glorified Spirits, hallowing and praiſing his Name better and more conſtantly; not ceaſing Day nor Night to cry, *holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.* And here they follow as they can, and give their Acclamation, though in a lower Key, yet as loud as they are able, *even ſo, Lord, hallowed be thy Name.* Now the Cauſe and Source of this their great Deſire of exalting and hallowing

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the Name of God, is their Love to him, which the Sight that he hath given them of his Excellency hath kindled in their Hearts.

After that, their chief Delight is to think of him, and ſpeak of his Name; gladly would they have him highly eſteemed by all, and this is their Grief, that they can find ſo few to bear them Company and help them in this, in hallowing and extolling his Name, which is ſo deep engraven on their Hearts. See how pathetically the *Pſalmiſt* repeats that again and again, *Pſal.* cvii. *O that Men would praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs, and his wonderful Works to the Children of Men.* And when they hear or ſee any thing tending to the Diſhonour of his Name, this wounds them, and pierces them through as a Sword, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks. They are far from Envy or evil Eye, yea they rejoice in the Gifts and Graces that God beſtows upon others, although it be beyond what they have themſelves; for ſtill it ſerves their Deſires, and anſwers what they are moſt earneſt in, it tends to the hallowing and glorifying of the Name of God. And what they have themſelves, they are not in Danger to grow vain upon it; rather they wonder at the free Grace of God, and extol that, and think with themſelves, "What am I, that he "ſhould have had Compaſſion on me, and pluck'd "me out of the Crowd of the loſt World, and gi-"ven me any Deſire to hallow his Name, while "others are blaſpheming it, and delighting to diſ-"honour it?" but ever the more they receive from God, they are the more humble, the more deſirous of his Praiſe, and regardleſs of their own. Any Holineſs that is in them they know well is from him, and therefore all the Glory of Holineſs muſt return thither, from whence Holineſs originally comes; and the very End for which they deſire Increaſe of Holineſs in themſelves, is to the end that they may

the more hallow his Name, from whom they have it; and by the Increaſe of their Stock, there may be an Increaſe of the Tribute of Praiſe to God.

But, alas! how far are we from this Mind? What Hypocriſy is it, for the ſame Mouth to utter this Requeſt, that dare profane the Name of God by vain Swearing? That which is *holy*, as the *Hebrew* Word imports, is *ſeparated* from common Uſe, (although it was not holy before) and ought not to be profaned; leaſt of all this Name, that is not made holy by ſuch a Separation, but is primitively holy in itſelf; and they that uſe it raſhly and unholily, are deeply guilty of deſpiſing the Majeſty of God. 'Tis not poſſible that any that is truly ſenſible of his Greatneſs and Holineſs, can cuſtomarily abuſe his Name, that bleſſed Name that he hopes to bleſs for ever. You ſay, it is your Cuſtom; it is a Wonder to hear Men ſpeak thus as an Excuſe, it is the deepeſt Accuſation. Are not Men known by their Cuſtoms? Do not thoſe diſcover what they are? It is your Cuſtom, what gain you by that? You muſt confeſs, it is ſuch a one as is the Cuſtom of the Children of Satan, the profeſt Enemy of God's Name, as the Delight and Cuſtom of hallowing his Name is the Badge of his Children. 2. It is your Cuſtom; then know, it is his Cuſtom not to acquit them, but make them feel the Weight of his puniſhing Hand, that dare make it a Cuſtom to diſhonour his Name. Again, they that profane his holy Day, they that ſanctify not his Name by calling on it daily in private, and generally all that by an unſanctified Life do blot the Profeſſion of Chriſtians, what do they mean to lie ſo groſly, not unto Men but unto God, to his Face, in praying thus? as if they deſired the hallowing of his Name by all, and yet do nothing but unhallow it themſelves. Think it not ſufficient to the hallowing of his Name, that his Houſe and Wor-

Worſhip is purged of Abuſes, though they be holy, yet unleſs we ourſelves be holy too, we pollute all in our Uſe of them, the Worſhip, and Sabbaths, and name of God, our filthy Hands defile all. Let us not thus provoke God, leſt in juſt Wrath and Puniſhments, he ſanctify his own Name upon us, which we profane, as he threatens againſt the *Jews* by his Prophets.

Be not ſatisfied to think ſlighty and ſuperficially of God, take time to conſider him, and know who he is; and then you will reverence him in your Thoughts. It deſerves and requires all the whole Heart to be taken up with it; and alas! what is a Heart, a narrow thing, though the largeſt of Hearts, as *Solomon's*, *large as the Sand of the Sea*, to an infinite God! We can find time for our earthly Thoughts, and for vain fooliſh Thoughts, that are good for nothing, and ſhall we ſhut out God, or think any ſudden paſſing Look enough for him. 2. Behave yourſelves with regard of him in his Worſhip; ἁγια ἁγίως, let holy Things be done holily. 3. Honour it in your Lives, eſpecially ſuch as do know his Name, grow daily more reſpective and tender of it, and be more circumſpect in your Actions, and *as he who hath called you is holy, ſo be ye holy in all Manner of Converſation.*

Thy Kingdom come.] He that is the Beginning of all things, muſt likewiſe of Neceſſity be the End of them all, and then are our Intentions righteſt and pureſt, when we are moſt poſſeſt with the Deſire of that higheſt End, the Glory of God, and look ſtraighteſt unto it: and if this Purpoſe ought to diffuſe through all our Actions, certainly in Prayer it ſhould be moſt lively and active, becauſe Prayer is ſo direct, and expreſs a Turning of the Face of the Soul unto God, and ſetting of its Eye upon him. Therefore, this Petition follows forth the ſame De-

ſire with the former, wiſhing Honour to God. He is a moſt holy God, and the *former* Requeſt was for his Glory in *that*, in the *ſanctifying* of his Name; he is a King, a great King, the greateſt of all, and *this* wiſhes his Glory in that Senſe, that his *Kingdom* may be advanced. *Thy Kingdom come.* 1. We ſhall enquire what his Kingdom is. 2. What is the coming of it. And, 3. Shall ſpeak of the Petition itſelf.

This Kingdom is not his univerſal Supremacy over all the World, and all the Creatures in it, as being their Maker and their Preſerver, and ſo having the higheſt and juſteſt Title, and the moſt abſolute Kind of Dominion over all things; but his peculiar Royalty over his Church. By the former he is called *King of Nations*, *Jer.* x. 7. and by the latter, his Stile is *King of Saints*, *Apoc.* xv. 3. Of the former the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks, *Pſal.* xxiv. 1. but that which he adds *Ver.* 3. concerns the latter, and ſo on in the *Pſalm*, and *Ver.* 7. *Lift up your Heads, O ye Gates, that the King of Glory may come in.*

This Kingdom is gathered and ſelected out of the other, and though the leſs in Quantity, yet in God's Account the far more precious than all the reſt; the Church is the Jewel in the Ring of the World, in it he hath his peculiar Reſidence and chief Delight; as Kings chuſe one of their Palaces, and (if they have more) one of their Kingdoms to dwell in more than another. Thoſe things that are hid from the reſt of the World concerning this King, are made known to his Subjects of this his ſelect Kingdom, and it is in it that he opens up, diſplays after a ſpecial Manner more than in all the World beſides, both the Glory of his Majeſty, and the Riches of his Bounty, *here* in Part, and fully *hereafter*, and according to that Difference it is diſtinguiſhed into the Kingdom of *Grace*, and that of *Glory*.

The Kingdom of *Grace* is to be conſidered, 1. In the

the external Means and Adminiſtration of it. 2. In its inward Being and Power: In the former Senſe, it is of a larger Extent; but in the latter, of a more uniform Nature in itſelf, and more conform to its Head. The former, the Kingdom of Grace in its outward Adminiſtration, is plainly the whole viſible Church; but the inward Power of the Kingdom of Grace, is only in the Hearts of thoſe that are truly ſanctified, and Members of the inviſible Church.

Jeſus Chriſt is ordained and anointed the King and Head of both, political; but of the one, natural, and therefore altogether indiſſoluble, not only in regard of the whole, but of each Part and Member of it.

The viſible Church is but a little Parcel, a Kingdom choſen out of the World; but the truly Godly, that are alone the Subjects of the inward Kingdom of Grace, are but a ſmall Part of that Part, a choice Part of the viſible Church, as it is a choice Part of the viſible World.

Now theſe three, The Kingdom of Glory, and thoſe two Kinds of the Kingdom of Grace ſtand in this Subordination; the inward Kingdom of Grace, is the Way and Preparation for that of Glory, and the outward Kingdom of Grace in the viſible Church, is the Means and Way of introducing, and eſtabliſhing, and increaſing the inward; ſo that both of them look forward to the Kingdom of Glory, as their utmoſt End, and ſhall terminate and end in it.

The firſt of theſe, the external or political Kingdom of Chriſt in the viſible Church, conſiſts in his abſolute and ſupreme Authority, to appoint the Laws of his Church, and Rulers by theſe Laws. And the Uſe of the Word, and Sacraments, and Diſcipline, according to his own Appointment, is the Acknowledgment of him as King of his Church.

The other, the inward Kingdom of Grace, is then received in the Heart, when the Spirit of God moves

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it to a willing Subjection to Jeſus Chriſt, and the whole Soul ſubmits itſelf to be governed by him; he enters indeed by Conqueſt, and yet is moſt gladly received; it is both a lawful and a favourable Conqueſt, becauſe he frees the Soul, which is his by ſo many Rights, from the Tyranny of a moſt cruel Uſurper, the Prince of Darkneſs, and brings in a Kingdom full of Sweetneſs and Happineſs; there is no worſe in it than theſe, *Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.*

This is the Folly of an unbelieving Mind, that it entertains moſt falſe Prejudices againſt the Kingdom of Chriſt, thinks that if it let him in, it ſhall be controll'd and curb'd, and therefore reſolves againſt it, and ſtudies how to hold him out, *conſults* (as it is in the 2d *Pſalm*) *againſt the Lord and his Anointed.* But this is a lamentable Madneſs to dream of Liberty in the midſt of Chains, and to be afraid of a Deliverer; there is no Soul that opens to this King of Glory, but can teſtify that it never knew what true Liberty was, till it admitted this Kingdom of God, till there was a Throne for Chriſt erected within it.

The third, the Kingdom of *Glory*, would you hear wherein that conſiſts? It it ſuch as we cannot hear, nor ſpeak of as it is. And this indeed ſays more of it than all we can ſay, That the Excellency of it is unſpeakable, yea unconceivable: This we are ſure of, to ſpeak comparatively of it, (which is our Help in Things we underſtand not in themſelves) that all the Kingdoms of the World, unite all their Glory together, are baſe and poor in reſpect of it, but *ſplendida in ſerico*, and that all the Delights we have here, not only of Nature, but even of Grace, are leſs to it than the ſmalleſt Sparkle is to the Sun in its Brightneſs. All that is done here by our King Chriſt, in the ruling of his Church, and Power of his Ordinances, and beſtowing of Graces

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on his own, are but Preludes and Preparations for that, and when that cometh, this way of ruling his Church and People ſhall ceaſe, as having attain'd its End. Chriſt ſhall deliver up the Kingdom to the Father; Word and Sacraments and Diſcipline ſhall be at an End, and then God ſhall be *all in all.*

2. The Coming of the Kingdom of God in the former two, is the extending and ſpreading of them to theſe Places, and Perſons that have not yet received them, the Increaſe of their Power where they are entertain'd; for they come gradually, and that Kingdom of Glory as it is concerned in the other, comes forward in them ſo far, and haſtens towards its Perfection; but in itſelf as their Conſummation, it ſhall come at once altogether in the End of Time.

3. So then in the Petition all theſe are included, and in their largeſt Extent; for it is to take it too narrow and too low, to reſtrain it only to our own Intereſt in this Kingdom, either of Grace or Glory, or both. Thus *David* excites *all to praiſe the Lord*, *Pſal.* ciii. but moſt his own Soul begins with that, and ends with it. Although all they that deſire it aright, do deſire that they may partake of it, (for if they deſire that God may be glorified, they cannot, but even out of Love to that Glory, beſides their own Happineſs, deſire that they themſelves may be among theſe that may honour God as the Subjects of his Kingdom) yet they ſtay not there, but dilate their Hearts to wiſh the Advancement and Accompliſhment of his Kingdom in all the Elect, and in all thoſe Ways that tend to it; and their Love may riſe to that high Strain, as without conſidering their own Intereſt at all, yea, ſuppoſing that they were to be ſhut out of his Kingdom themſelves, yet ſtill to wiſh, *Thy Kingdom come.* "Let "others enjoy and bleſs thee, Lord, for ever, even "though I ſhould be excluded: Let thine Elect be

"gathered,

" gathered, though I were none of them: Be thou " great, O Lord, whatſoever become of me."

1. Conſidering what a Height of Glory will ariſe to God out of the final ſubduing of his Enemies, and full Deliverance of his Church, and the bringing home all his Children after all their Sufferings and Sorrows, to ſit down together to that great Marriage-Supper of the Lamb; they cannot but thus breathe forth their Longings and Wiſhes, that that Time may be haſtened, and the Fulneſs of their Lord's Kingdom accompliſhed, where it ſhall abide for all Eternity.

2. Both in relation to that End, and likewiſe in reſpect of the very preſent Glory that redounds to God in it, they earneſtly deſire the Advancement and Enlargement of Chriſt's Kingdom here on Earth. For beſides that thus it is riſing to its Perfection, it is no ſmall preſent Glory to our King Chriſt, as a Teſtimony of his invincible Power, that he rules in the very midſt of his Enemies, and in deſpite of them all, *Pſal.* cx. Not only ſits ſure and keeps his own, thruſt at him who will, but when he pleaſes gains upon them, and enlarges his Territories, and grows greater by their Reſiſtances and Oppoſitions. He is here, as *David*, often aſſaulted, and put to defend his Kingdom often in War, but always a Conqueror; but after this militant Kingdom he ſhall be as *Solomon*, who likewiſe typified him, reigning in perfect Peace.

Now becauſe the Enemies of his Kingdom are not yet, as they ſhall be, all under his Feet, but round about him, and inceſſantly plotting and working againſt him, and Satan hath his Kingdom and his Throne in the World oppoſite to Chriſt; therefore this is one chief Point of this Requeſt, that all adverſe Power may be brought low, that all his Enemies may lick the Duſt, and melt before him as

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Wax before the Fire: And for us, eſpecially in theſe Times, that that Kingdom of Antichriſt, the Son of Perdition, may, anſwerably to that his Name, be brought to Perdition, that God would remember his Promiſe, (for the Faithful are called his Remembrancers, though he forgets not, and hath his ſet Time for Judgment, yet he loves to be ſtir'd up by the Cries of his Children) that he would make good at length thoſe Words he hath ſpoken of *Babel's* Ruin, and the flouriſhing Eſtate of his Church in theſe latter Times.

That the Power of the Word, and Purity of Religion, maugre all the Policy and Power of Men oppoſing it, may ſpread and extend itſelf, and make irreſiſtible Progreſs, as the Sun in his Courſe: That Jeſus Chriſt may be daily taking further Poſſeſſion of the Nations, even to the Ends of the Earth, according to the Patent of his Father's Donation. And the Certainty of its Endurance and Growth till it be compleat, ſhould not abate, but increaſe the Vigour of our Prayers for it; and the nearer Things are their Accompliſhment, the more uſually the Lord excites the Hopes and Prayers of his People about them, and they pray the more earneſtly, *Dan.* ix. moving naturally in it, and therefore faſteſt when neareſt their Place.

Again, we pray in this, that where Chriſt doth reign in his outward Ordinances, there he would bring in his ſpiritual Kingdom into the Souls of Men, that *Sinners may be converted unto him:* The Love of the Glory of Jeſus Chriſt will deſire this earneſtly, that many Hearts may be brought in to ſubmit to him; for the Glory of a King is in the Multitude of his Subjects. Further, that they who are his People may grow more conform to his Laws; that his Dominion may be more powerful in their Hearts and Lives; and particularly, that we ourſelves may

find it ſo. *You that* will not receive the Kingdom of God *within* yourſelves, to what Purpoſe do you ſpeak this, as if you deſir'd it to be enlarged, and flouriſh *abroad?* You can have no Comfort in it, remaining Slaves to Sin, and ſo Enemies indeed to it; neither the Kingdom of Chriſt in the Government of the Church on the one Side, nor on the other, the Coming of his Kingdom of Glory, can do you any Benefit, while the third is wanting, the inward Kingdom of his Grace, which is the true End of the former, and Means to partake of the Happineſs of the latter. Why wiſh you the Day of the Lord? as the Prophet ſays of that Day he there ſpeaks of: Miſtake it not, though that Day of his Kingdom ſhall be all Glory in itſelf, it ſhall be to you, remaining ſtill impenitent, Darkneſs and not Light, full of Horror and Amazement. 2. As you can have no Comfort in his Kingdom, ſo you cannot really wiſh its Advancement; you wiſh it well elſewhere, as if you were content it ſhould be any where, rather than within yourſelves. But would you indeed have his Kingdom to be embraced and advanced, then do for one, let him be thy King; firſt give him thine own Heart, and then wiſh him many more, for then thou wilt wiſh it heartily and truly. You that have received this Kingdom, yet have need ſtill, even in that Senſe, to wiſh the Coming of it in further Degrees and fuller Efficacy. Find you not many Rebels yet unſubdued? No doubt they that ſearch and know their own Hearts, will, and often do complain of them to their King. "O ſuch Swarms of "Luſts, and unruly irregular Deſires! when ſhall "they all be brought into Subjection?" And ſo they lift up their Wiſh, from this to the other, the full and glorious Kingdom, and ſay again and again, *Thy Kingdom come.* This is the noble Deſire that takes up the Hearts of the Godly, while others

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are deſiring and purſuing low baſe Things; their Minds, and their Endeavour to their Power, are chiefly ſet upon this, the Advancement of the Kingdom of God. They ſeek not themſelves, and their own Things, with the World, to the Prejudice of this Kingdom; no, they deſire to loſe any thing, to ſuffer Contempts and Abaſements themſelves, ſo this Kingdom may flouriſh. St. *Paul* cares not what he be accounted, *modò magnificetur Chriſtus*, *Phil.* i. as the faithful Miniſters of State, (and wiſe Princes chuſe ſuch) that are not making up themſelves to their Maſter's Diſadvantage, but always preferring his Honour to their private Benefit, feeling his Loſſes and Gains more than their own; as was ſaid of St. *Auguſtin*, *Dominicis ſemper lucris gaudens, & damnis mœrens.* This is the right Temper of the Servants and Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt, to be all for their Maſter, willing that their Name, and Eſtates, and Lives, and all may make a Part of his Footſtool to ſtep up to his Throne; not forc'd as his Enemies to be ſo, but willingly laying themſelves low for his Glory. And this Comfort they have, that when his Kingdom ſhall come in its Fulneſs, and all his Enemies ſhall be trodden down for ever, then they ſhall be glorified with him, and ſhall ſee his Glory with exceeding Joy. Therefore do they ſo often deſire his Coming, and are ſo weary of all they ſee here: And when he ſays himſelf, for their Aſſurance and Comfort, *Surely I come quickly*, their earneſt Deſire makes them eccho, *Even ſo, come Lord Jeſus.*

There is ſome Loſs to the Fleſh, if we will hear it in this Deſire in each Kind; the erecting of Chriſt's Kingdom in Purity in his Church, thruſts out the outward Pomp and Magnificence that naturally we like ſo well: His Kingdom of Grace cannot be in the Soul, without the forſaking of all our accuſtom-

ed and pleaſing Ways of Sin; but they that know the Excellency of his Kingdom, are well content to forego all that ſuits not with it. Thus that his Kingdom of Glory may come, the World muſt be burnt up, *&c.* and that we particularly may come to it, we muſt paſs through Death; but it is worth all.

Thy Will be done in Earth, as it is in Heaven.]

I will direct my Prayer to thee, ſays *David*, Pſal. v. The Word is, I will ſet it in Order, or orderly addreſs it, which is not the curious contriving either of the Words, or Method, (for there may be moſt of that, where there is leaſt of this right directing it to God) but the due ordering of the Frame and Deſires of the Heart; and certainly one main Point of that is taught us, as we have ſaid, in the Order of this Prayer, in this Particular, that it not only prefers the Honour of God to all our own Intereſt, ſetting the Heart firſt upon that; but keeps it to it, cauſes it to dwell upon that in three ſeveral Petitions, varying the Expreſſion of that one Deſire, as often as there be ſeveral Requeſts following of our own Concernment, teaching us that that doth, in its own Worth, and therefore ſhould likewiſe in our Affection, itſelf alone being but one, weigh down all the different Things beſides that we can deſire: And thus withal it is accommodate to our Dulneſs, for that our Hearts would not readily with one Word be either duly ſtirred up, or ſtretched forth in the heavenly Deſire; ſo that both to excite and dilate them the more, it is thus iterated without vain Tautology. This ſo ſhort and compleat a Form given us by ſo wiſe a Maſter, is far from that, yea, it was particularly intended in oppoſition to that Abuſe. And not only doth the Dignity of the Thing itſelf, and our Indiſpoſedneſs require this adding of one Requeſt to another concerning it, but there is in the Petitions themſelves a very profitable Difference, tho' their

their Scope is one; they are as ſo many ſeveral Arrows aim'd at the ſame Mark.

The firſt, in general, wiſhes all manner of Honour to the Name of God: And becauſe his Name is eſpecially honoured in the Advancement, and in End compleating of his ſpiritual Kingdom, the ſecond is particular in that; and becauſe, until that Kingdom be compleated and brought all together, it lies in two ſeveral Countries: There is one Part of it already above, which is the appointed Place for the Perfection and Perpetuity of this Kingdom; another Part here below, but tending thither. And this third Petition particularly concerns theſe of this lower Region and Condition; deſiring this, that in Obedience to their King, they may be as conform as is poſſible to thoſe above. *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven.*

Thy Will.] God is moſt perfectly one, and his Will one, yea, his Will is himſelf, he is *purus actus*; yet in reſpect of its ſeveral Objects or Circumſtances that concern them, it is diverſly diſtinguiſhed in Schools, ſometimes needleſly, yea erroneouſly, but ſome of them are ſound and uſeful. But here we ſhall not need them much. His Will is taken according to a very uſual Figure, for that which he wills, and we deſire here, that we ourſelves and others may be obedient to his Will in every thing, even here on Earth, that he may be acknowledged and ſerved, not only in Heaven, but here likewiſe. Τὸ θελητὸν.

For this (no queſtion) means not the Equality of our Obedience to theirs, but the Quality of it, that tho' it fall very far ſhort of ſo perfect a Pattern, yet it may bear ſome Reſemblance to it, as a Scholar's Writing, though it be nothing ſo good as his Copy, yet may have ſo much Likeneſs, as to ſhew he follows it. It doth Οὐχ ὅσον ἀλλ' ὡς.

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no wrong, but helps a Man much in any thing, the more perfect Example he hath before him; although he be not able to match it, yet the looking on it makes him do the better: Though an Archer ſhoot not ſo high as he aims, yet the higher he takes his Aim, the higher he ſhoots. And that we may not think it ſtrange that we have here the Citizens of Heaven ſet before us as a Model for Obedience, we have our heavenly Father himſelf propounded by our Saviour in the former Chapter, as our Example for Perfection, *Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

The Obedience in Heaven is, 1. Univerſal, without chuſing and excepting; and this is, becauſe the Will and Command of God is the very Reaſon of it. *Pſal.* ciii. 20. the Angels are ſaid *to do his Commandments, and to hearken to the Voice of his Word*; they wait but for a Word from him, and that is enough. And in this ſhould we deſire to be like them. Though we cannot fully keep any one Commandment, yet ſhould we exclude none of them from our Endeavour; yea the rather, becauſe we want that Perfection in the Degree, ſhould we ſtudy this other, which is a Kind of Perfection in the Deſign and Purpoſe, *to have Reſpect to all the Commandments*, as *David* ſays; to have our Eye upon them all, as the Word there is: So *Pſal.* xvi. 8. *I have ſet the Lord always before me*, [*æqualiter poſui*] in an even conſtant Regard of his Will. And the Want of this diſcovers, that much of our Obedience hath not the right Stamp on it, no way heavenly.

A Man may think he approves and does the Will of God in ſome Things, where it is but by Accident, becauſe the Letter of the Commandment is coincident with his own Will; and ſo it is not the Will of God, but his own, that moves him: Therefore in doing that which God commands, he does not

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God's Will, but his own; and therefore when they meet not, but are contrary, there it appears, for he leaves God's Will then, and follows his own. A covetous Father condemns the Prodigality of his laviſh Son, and the Son again cries out againſt the Avarice of his niggardly Father. And thus both ſeem to condemn Sin: But the Truth is, neither do it; it is but two extream Sins fighting together, neither of them regarding the Rule that God hath ſet; it is but their two Idols choaking each other, as the Heathen ſet their Gods together by the Ears. But they that therefore hate Sin, becauſe of God's Countermand, and love his Will for itſelf, their Obedience is more even, and regards the whole Will of God, and at all Times; for there is that Univerſality too in their Obedience, conform to that of Heaven: *So ſhall I keep thy Law* (ſays *David*) *continually, for ever and ever.*

See a Man's Carriage when tempted or provoked to ſome Sin; for when the Occaſion is out of Reach, and out of Sight, what wonder then he forbears? But when it offers itſelf, as by Company, Intemperance, or curſing or ſwearing by Paſſion, it appears, if a Man yield then, that Sin was not out before, but only lay cloſe and quiet within till it was ſtirred, as Mud in the Bottom of Water, *natura vexata prodit ſeipſam.* So a Man may for his own Gain, or his own Glory, do God's Will. *Jehu* could ſay to *Jonadab*, *Come and ſee my Zeal for the Lord.*

2. It is chearful. It is the very natural Motion of glorified Spirits to be acted and moved by the Will of God, *They excel in Strength*, ſays the *Pſalmiſt* in that *Pſal.* ciii. *and do his Commandments.* They have no other Uſe for all their Strength, that is the proper Employment of it. Thus the godly Man, in ſo far as he is renewed (for in ſo far he ſuits with Heaven) delights himſelf in the

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the Way of God's Commandments, takes more Pleaſure in keeping them, than profane Men do in all their Pleaſures of Sin, by which they break them. He is never well but when he is in the Way of Obedience, and the Ways of Sin are painful and grievous to him; then hath he moſt inward Gladneſs and Contentment, when he keepeth cloſeſt to his Rule. And the Reaſon why he finds the Law of God thus pleaſant is, becauſe it is not to him as to the ungodly one without, driving him violently, but it is within him, and therefore moves him ſweetly. *I delight to do thy Will, O my God*, Pſal. xl. 8. and he adds, *Thy Law is within my Heart*, or in the Midſt of my Bowels; ſo *Pſal.* lxxxiv. *In whoſe Heart are thy Ways*; not only their Feet in the Ways, but the Ways are in their Hearts.

3. They do the Will of God in Heaven unanimouſly and harmoniouſly; there is neither an evil Eye of Envy among them, nor a loſty Eye of Pride, whatſoever Degrees there be among them in their Stations and Employments. Not to be curious in that, nor obtrude ourſelves into Things we have not ſeen, yet ſure the leſſer do not envy the greater, nor the greater deſpiſe the leſs; and the Reaſon is, becauſe they are all ſo wholly taken up, and ſo ſtrongly united in this joint Deſire of doing the Will of God. Thus ought his Servants here, each one in his Place, and according to that which God hath diſpenſed to him, the greateſt humbly, and the meaneſt contentedly, mind this, and nothing but this, to do his Will.

Anſwerably to the Senſe of this Petition do godly Men in Prayer, 1. Vent their Regret and Grief unto God, that there is ſo little Regard and Obedience to his Will amongſt Men, that they ſee the greateſt part *taking Pleaſure in Unrighteouſneſs*, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks. Thus *David*, *Rivers of Water run down*

down mine Eyes, becauſe Men keep not thy Law. And as they bewail Ungodlineſs without them, ſo eſpecially the Strength of Corruption within themſelves: They begin there, and expreſs their Grief in the Preſence of God, that they are ſo clogged and hampered with Sin, cleaving faſt to them, and croſſing their Purpoſes of Obedience; ſaying with the Apoſtle, *I find a Law in my Members warring againſt the Law of my Mind.* 2. They declare their Deſire of Redreſs, both in themſelves and others; that their great Deſire is, that more Obedience were given unto God, and particularly that they had more Faculty and Strength to ſerve him, *Pſal.* cxix. 4, 5. 3. They pray in this, for the effecting of this their Deſire, that God would incline Mens Hearts, and particularly their own, to the Obedience of his Will, (whatſoever vain Will-Worſhippers ſay, they are indeed in that Senſe θεοὶ θρησκοι, make a Deity of the Will) not doubting that it is in his Hand to do ſo, and that he hath more Power of our Hearts than we ourſelves have; otherwiſe it were in vain to put theſe Supplications into his Hand, if he have no Power to anſwer them, to give them the real Anſwer of Performance. *Incline my Heart unto thy Law*, &c. *Turn us, O Lord*, &c. 4. They do in this Requeſt offer up their own Hearts to God, to be faſhioned and moulded to his Will: And every godly Man, if he had the Hearts of all the Men in the World in his Diſpoſe, he would diſpoſe them the ſame Way, lodge them with his own, and make one Sacrifice of all; his own he gives wholly, reſigns it up to his Lord, to be as a Piece of Wax in God's Hand, pliable to what Form he will, to do with it what he will, to turn out and baniſh whatſoever diſpleaſes him, and to make it to his own Mind. In a Word, this is the Deſire of a Chriſtian, that his own Will may be annihilated, and the Will

of God placed in its Room, that he may have no Will but God's, that he may be altogether ſubject to God's commanding, and his working Will, to do what he commands, and to be heartily content with what he does; for both theſe are in it *.

Where he commands any thing, though our own corrupt Will grumble at it, and think it hard, we muſt tread upon it to obey his Will, making that the Rule of all we do. To this End we muſt endeavour to be acquainted with his Will, and know what it is, otherwiſe we cannot do it; but once knowing it, this is the End of knowing, to do, otherwiſe (you know) that Knowledge will make us the worſe for it, the more guilty.

'Tis a ſafe and comfortable thing to walk every Step by his Direction; the conſtant Regard of that, is that (we ſee) which conforms us to Heaven. It was obſervable how this Will prevailed with *Abraham*; he was a loving Father, it appears, and upon *Sarah*'s private Motion, while there was no more, he could not find in his Heart to put *Iſhmael* out of Doors, that was but *the Son of the bond Woman*; but upon God's Command he was ready to put *Iſaac* to Death, that was *the Son of the Promiſe*. And he that taught us to pray thus, gives us his own Example in this, and he did the Will of his Father indeed, as it is done in Heaven, and he came to the Earth for that Purpoſe; then ſaid he, *Lo I come to do thy Will, O my God*; and in that great and moſt painful Part of his Work, *not my Will, but thine be done.* For our Actions then, let his Word be our Guide; and for the Events of Things, and all that concerns us, let his good Pleaſure and wiſe diſpoſing be our Will; let us give up the Rudder of our Life into his Hand, to be ſteer'd by him.

For

* 'Tis Love that makes this Union of Wills, *Idem velle & idem nolle.*

For our Actions, is it not better to obſerve his Will, than to be ſubject to our own corrupt Wills? and to Satan's, *led captive at his Will?* And as it is our beſt to do what pleaſeth him, ſo in all his Dealing with us to be pleaſed with what he does; not to think it were better for us to be richer or greater in the World than we are, or to murmur and ſtruggle under Affliction. There is nothing to be gained by this; *Who hath reſiſted his Will* at any Time? In all Things he doth what he will, whether it like us or not; our repining hinders not his working at all, but it hinders our own Comfort; our wreſtling and fretting doth but pain ourſelves. If we be his (as we profeſs) then we may be aſſured he loves us; and if we believe that, and withal believe that he is wiſer than we, then we muſt confeſs, that whatſoever he doth with us is better than our own chuſing for ourſelves could be.

This is the only way of conſtant Quietneſs and Contentment of Mind. Who is there outwardly ſo proſperous, but meets with many Things that croſs his Will? Now he that hath renounced his own Will, and is fixed upon a continual Complacency with the good Pleaſure and Providence of God, to will what he wills, and nothing elſe; every thing that befals him, he looks upon that Side of it as God's Will, and ſo is ſatisfied. "Doth God think "this good, and ſhall I think it evil?"

There is Difference of Eſtates, but all coming from the ſame Hand, which is *Job*'s Conſideration, to embrace and kiſs the worſt that can come, is our Duty; *It is the Lord* (ſaid *David*) *let him do with me what ſeems good in his Eyes*, 2 Sam. x. 12. Thus, "Wilt thou have me poor or rich, healthful or ſick, "eſteem'd or deſpis'd? Wilt thou that I live, or that "I dy? I am thine, thy Will be done."

Give us this Day our daily Bread.] Man is made

up of two different Principles, a Soul derived from Heaven, and a Body at firſt moulded out of Earth, as *Nazianzen* expreſſes it, πνεῦς ϗ χοῦς. the *Breath* of God, and the *Duſt* of the Earth *: And according to his Compoſure, ſo is this Prayer compoſed; being made for his Uſe, it is wiſely fitted to his Condition.

The greateſt Part of it is taken up with ſuch Deſires as are ſpiritual, and ſo moſt ſuitable to his worthier Part, his Soul, ſuch as do immediately concern God, and ſuch as properly concern itſelf. Yet the Body is not wholly ſhut out, though the meaner Part; yet being a Part of Man, and the Workmanſhip of God, this one Petition is beſtowed upon its Concernment.

Obſerve in it briefly, 1. The Matter or Object of the Requeſt. 2. The Qualification of it. The Matter under the Name of *Bread*, not only Bread for all Food, as the *Hebrews* do; but Food, ſo named, for all other Neceſſaries. By Bread, as the chief Support and Staff of Man's Life, is meant all needful temporal Bleſſings, Food, and Raiment, and Health, and Peace, &c. a Bleſſing on the Works of our Calling, and the Seaſons of the Year, and all our lawful temporal Affairs.

Though a godly Man looks upon the Neceſſities of this Life as a Piece of his preſent Captivity, and is often looking beyond it to that purer Life he hopes for; yet in the mean while he doth, in Obedience to God, uſe theſe Things, and in Dependence upon God he ſeeks them at God's own Hand.

In the Requeſt, together with its Object, as here we have it, there is, 1. Piety. 2. Moderation. *Godlineſs*, and *Soberneſs*.

1. *Piety*, asking our Bread of God; asking it in the true Notion by way of Gift. There is a natural

* *Ex igneo ſpiritu, & terreno corpore.*

ral Cry or Voice of our Neceſſity, and that not only ungodly Men, but unreaſonable Creatures have, the very Beaſts and Fowls, as the *Pſalm* hath it, *The Ravens ask their Meat from God*: but this ſpiritual Cry of Prayer, is the peculiar Voice of God's own Children.

Now to ask Bread, or needful temporal things at the Hands of God, is not only no way incongruous to the Piety and Spiritual-mindedneſs of a Chriſtian, nor no Wrong to the Majeſty of God; but on the contrary, it were Impiety in Man, and an Injury to God not to do ſo. We have here the Warrant of his own Command, *pray thus*, and is it not moſt reaſonable?

1. Seeing theſe things are neceſſary for us to receive, and in the Hand of God to beſtow, why ought we not to ſeek them there?

Although in his Wiſdom he knows what we need, and is in Bounty moſt ready to furniſh us, yet this is the Homage we owe to God, to preſent ourſelves and our Neceſſities before him, and ſeek our Supplies by Prayer. In it there is a clear Acknowledgment of the divine Providence and Goodneſs, and of our Faith and Reliance on it; and Faith is not only ſignified in Prayer in theſe things, but is acted and excited, and by that Means is increaſed and ſtrengthened. 2. Godlineſs hath both kinds of Promiſes, thoſe of the Life to come, and thoſe of this Life; and as Godlineſs hath Right to them both, ſo it teacheth to uſe them both, and particularly this Way, by turning the Promiſes into Prayers, as a Means appointed by God, both to fit us for Obtainment, and to obtain the Performance of them. 3. Though a Man hath his Proviſion by him, not only of a Day, but of many Years, yet hath he need ſtill daily to ask it of God, for it is ſtill in God's Hand to give it him, or not to give, though it is in a Man's own Hand

Hand in preſent Poſſeſſion. 1. It is in God's Diſpoſe to continue it to him, or ſuddenly to pluck it from him out of his Hand, or even out of his Mouth, *ut bolus ereptus è faucibus.* How many have been thus on a ſudden turned out of great Eſtates into extreme Poverty, either by the Hands of Men, which are moved by God, or by ſome immediate Accident from his own Hand, and others by little and little, their Eſtates conſuming and melting as Snow-balls. In the former the Judgment of God is as a *Lyon*, and in the latter as a *Moth*, as the Prophet ſpeaks. Again, 2. If God do continue a Man in his Poſſeſſions, yet there is further needful for his chearful Uſe of daily Bread, that Calmneſs and Content of Mind, and Healthfulneſs of Body, that are God's peculiar Gifts, without which all is unſavoury. Is the Mind in Bitterneſs or Diſtemper, or the Body tied to its Sick-bed? this diſreliſhes a Man's daily Bread, tho' it be of the richeſt Kind. 3. Having Bread and a Diſpoſition to uſe it, yet there is further an Influence of bleſſing from God needful to make it ſerve its proper End; and without this, that Staff of Life is but as a broken Staff in a Man's Hand that cannot ſupport him. 4. Beſides that ordinary Bleſſing, there is yet ſomething further that a godly Man deſires, and deſires it moſt of all, a ſecret Character and Stamp of the peculiar Favour of God even upon his Bread, his temporal Enjoyments. And this is a proper Fruit of Prayer, as there is (as is already ſaid) a peculiar Voice of God's own Children in this Requeſt, ſo God knows it particularly, and diſtinguiſhes it from the common Voice of natural Men, and other Creatures that call for Supply; and therefore he gives that peculiar Voice of their Suit a peculiar Anſwer, together with the daily Bread which he gives to others, and a common Bleſſing on it, they have ſomething that is not given to others. This is

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that which particularly ſweetens their Bread, that they receive it after a ſpecial Manner out of their Father's own Hand, having humbly asked it by a Prayer as his Gift.

That is the other thing obſervable in the Word of the Requeſt, *Give.*

We are not by this forbidden, no, nor diſpenſed with from Labour and honeſt Induſtry for it, but after all our Labour we are ſtill to acknowledge all as a free Gift, both the Bread we obtain by Labour and the Strength by which we labour. Juſt as we find it of the other Bread, the Bread of Life, *John* vi. 27. *Labour for it, which the Son of Man will give*; laboured for, and yet given. The Fruit of our Labours may be a juſt Reward from Men, but it is always free from God, even theſe loweſt Benefits to the beſt and holieſt Men: *I am leſs* (ſays *Jacob*) *than the leaſt of thy Mercies.* We have no Motive for the leaſt Mercy but his own Goodneſs, as our Father; ſo that it ſuits with this, as with all the other Requeſts here, though we deſerve nothing, yet he is our Father: It is proper for Children to ask Bread of their Father, as our Saviour teaches us in the next Chapter, therefore he teaches us here to ſay, *Father, give us Bread.*

2. The Moderation of the Deſire appears, in compariſon of the Number of the other Petitions, all the reſt for things ſpiritual, and but one for temporals; thoſe that regard the Glory of God as the chief, are three to one with it, and thoſe that concern our own ſpiritual Good two for one.

Thus for the Number; and the Order or Place, which ſo many have taken quite contrary, it ſuits very well with this, as the leaſt of our Requeſts, and ſo to be accounted by us. It is ſtrange that this right Place of it ſhould have ſcar'd Men from its right Meaning, and perſuaded them to take it for

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our ſpiritual Food, or the Bread of Life, becauſe it is the firſt of the three. But taking it as it is, for this Life's Neceſſaries, there is no need of ſuch Reaſons as ſome give for its ſtanding in this Order, that are a little light and unſolid. But to omit even theſe that are more pertinent, which juſtify this Order, though this Petition be leſs than the two following, it ſeems truly the only fit Place for it, for that very Reaſon, becauſe it is the leaſt. It is known to be the ordinary Courſe of skilful Orators to place the meaneſt Part of their Speech in the middle; and in this let the Ear of any underſtanding Mind be Judge, whether it ſounds not much better, that this Requeſt paſs in the middle, than if the Prayer ſhould have ended with it, whereas now it begins ſpiritually and cloſes ſo. And this Petition, which is *de impedimentis militiæ noſtræ*, (for the things of this Life prove ſo too often) is caſt in the middle.

Now, how few are there that follow Chriſt's Eſtimate in this, that have the very Strength of their Deſires, and moſt of their Thoughts on things that are ſpiritual, and do but in paſſing lend a Word to the things of this Life *; this Proportion few will admit, it makes not for their Purpoſe. The Apoſtle gives this Character of thoſe that periſh, that *they mind earthly things*.

But to conſider the Words, each Word deſigning the Matter of this Requeſt doth clearly teach us Moderation in it. *Give us our daily Bread. Having Food and Raiment*, (ſays the Apoſtle, 1 *Tim.* vi. 8) *let us be content.* How few be there of us, if any, that want theſe, and yet how few that have Contentment? It is the Enormity and Boundleſſneſs of our Deſires, that cauſeth this. There is no Neceſſity of curious Food and Raiment, but ſuch Food as nouriſhes, and ſuch Raiment as covers.

Our

* *Quamprimum à corpore ad animam redeundum.* Sen.

Our daily Bread, in the Original ἐπιούσιον. Not at all to diſpute the Word, its genuine Senſe is, *ſuch as is fit for our daily Suſtentation*, therefore rendered *daily Bread*; and anſwers well to the Word in that Petition of *Agur*, *Prov.* xxx. 8. *convenient* or *proportionable Food*, and ſo agrees with that we ſaid of Bread; *proportionable*, not to our Luſt, but our Neceſſity. This was the Sin of the *Jews*, and a moſt impertinent Sin in the Wilderneſs, *they asked Meat for their Luſt*; they were not content of Bread for themſelves, but muſt have Meat for their Luſt too, muſt have that fed likewiſe. We are not to be Carvers of the Proportion ourſelves, but leave that to God, who knows beſt what is convenient for us; therefore the Word is there, *of my Set* or *ordained Portion*, ordained by thee. *Lechem Talmud. Num.* iv. 7. *Lechem Chukki.*

Our Bread, Ἡμῶν.] Not ſeeking any other but that which is our own by our juſt Induſtry, and God's free Gift. What is it but the baſe immoderate Deſire of having, that ſtretches a Man beyond this? When a Man lays down that Concluſion with himſelf, that he muſt have ſo much, then it follows, that any way tending to that he muſt uſe, if he can, by right; but if not, any way rather than miſs; by Violence and Oppreſſion, or by Deceit, through all ways fair and foul*: When a Man is once upon that Journey there is no ſtopping, 'till either God recal him, or he plunge himſelf in the Pit of Deſtruction. *They that will be rich* (ſays the Apoſtle) that are reſolved upon that, *they fall into Temptation, and divers Snares, that drown Men*, &c. that is the Iſſue.

This Day.] It is true that this condemns not a due Providence in Men for themſelves and their Families, in a juſt and moderate way; but Men deceive themſelves in this, few ſtay there, but under that

* *Si poſſis rectè, ſi non, quocunque modo rem.* Hor.

Name harbour groſs Avarice and Earthlineſs. But in this Word, we have the true Temper of a Chriſtian Mind, that whatſoever is his own lawful Providence, and whatſoever is the Succeſs of it, that he lives and relies on, is the Providence of God, not his own; he lives upon that from one Day to another, as a Child in his Father's Houſe; and for Proviſion for afterwards thinks it is as good in God's Hand as if it were in his own, and therefore asks not ſo much Stock or ſo much yearly Rent, but *Bread for to Day.* If he have much Land or great Revenues, yet truſts no more in that, than if he had nothing; and if he have To-Day, and nothing for To-morrow (as the *Iſraelites* had Manna) yet truſts no leſs in God than if he had thouſands; he reſolves thus, "Whether I "have much or little I am at God's providing, and "live upon that from Day to Day; *the Lord is my* "*Shepherd, I ſhall not want*, Pſal. xxiii. 1."

Εὐσέβεια. αὐτάρκεια. 1 *Tim.* vi. 6.

Theſe two go together, as we have obſerved them here together, *Godlineſs* and *Moderation*, Godlineſs in this particular, of caſting over our Care of temporal things on God by Prayer, *Phil.* iv. 5. *Let your Moderation be known*, &c. But how ſhall we have it? *Make your Requeſts known unto God*, and that *in all things*; that will eaſe you, and not trouble him. But when we lodge ſuch Deſires as are not fit indeed to be imparted to him, this is our Shame and proves our Vexation. It is a wonder what Men mean; but it is a Folly ſo rooted in Men's Hearts that no Diſcourſe will pluck it up; they imagine that there is Happineſs in having much, and will neither believe Religion, nor Reaſon, nor Experience, tho' all teach the contrary. They cannot be perſuaded to make this the Rule of their Deſires, *daily Bread*, and *for To-day*, but are ſtill projecting for long time to come, though they are not ſure of a Day. Men

are

are ſtill beginning to live, even when their Years tell them they ſhould be thinking how to dy; are upon new Contrivances for the World, when they muſt ſhortly leave it: And this is one Point of this our Diſeaſe, that it grows ſtill, and is ſtrongeſt in old Age, when there is leaſt Reaſon for it *.

What is this that Riches can do? Our Saviour tells us, if we will believe him, that *Man's Life doth not conſiſt in the Abundance of the things he poſſeſſeth*; † there is ſomething neceſſary we ſee, and truly that is not much, and what is more than ſerves, many times proves but more Encumbrance; one Staff will help a Man in his Way, but a Bundle of Staves would burden and weary him. Would Men but ſtop a little and ask themſelves, 'What is this I do? 'What do I aim at in all my Turmoil?' It might poſſibly recal them, would they but hear *Solomon*'s Queſtion, and tell him *what good the rich have of poſſeſſing more than they uſe, but only of beholding them with their Eyes*; if there be any thing more, it is more Care and Troubles *. He that hath a hundred Rooms hath but one Body, he can lodge but in one at once; he that might have Sea and Land ranſack'd for Delicates to his Table, hath himſelf but one Appetite to ſerve with them all.

Then conſider that beyond the Bounds of this Petition, if a Man once paſs, there be no Bounds after, he knows not where to ſtay †; one thouſand would have ſomething more to ſave it unſpent, and when that grows a little, it is beſt even to make another thouſand, and ſave that too, and fall a ſcraping for more.

And if this is always a Frenzy, moſt of all in theſe

* *Quo minus via reſtat, eo plus viatici comparare.*
† *Ad ſupervacua ſudatur.*
* *Et cura circum laqueata tecta volantes.*
† *Depinge ubi ſiſtam.*

times, *Behold*, ſays God to *Baruch*, *I will break down that which I have built, and that which I have planted will I pluck up, even this whole Land, and ſeekeſt thou great things for thyſelf?* Jer. xlv. 4, 5. "But is "it not Wiſdom to be provident, and ſee far before "a Man; and to look no further but to the preſent, "is the Character of a Fool?" True it is indeed, and therefore the truly wiſe Man deſpiſes this Providence for a baſe uncertain Life, and is content if alive but from one Day to another; but there is a higher Deſign in his Head, a Providence of a further Reach that ſees afar off indeed, to make himſelf an Eſtate for Eternity, that takes up his Thoughts and Pains; the other is the groſſeſt Short-ſightedneſs, to look no further than a Moment; it is indeed, μυωπάζειν, as St. *Peter* ſpeaks. But that Life the Chriſtian's Eye is upon, is of another Nature, where none of theſe poor things ſhall have Place, *No marrying, nor giving in Marriage*, as our Saviour ſays, ſo no eating nor drinking, no need of Bread, nor of this Prayer for it, but we ſhall be *as the Angels* of God.

And forgive us our Debts, &c.] *Thy loving Kindneſs*, ſays *David*, *is better than Life.* Therefore this Requeſt riſes above the former: In it we ſought Bread for the preſent Life; in this we entreat his Favour, not Corn, nor Wine, nor Oil, but that that glads the Heart more than them all, *The Light of his Countenance*, that the thick Cloud of our Sins be diſpelled by a free Pardon, as he promiſes *Iſa.* xliv. 2.

In this Petition we have, 1. The Requeſt. 2. The Clauſe added. That which is here called *Debts*, St. *Luke* hath *Sins*; and here in the Obſervation our Saviour adds, they are called, παραπτώματα, *Offences*. Now Sin, as it is called a Debt, is taken for the Guiltineſs of Sin, which is no other but *pœnas debere*, to owe the ſuffering of Puniſhment, or an Obligement to the Curſe which the Law hath pronounced againſt Sin;

and

and becauſe this reſults ſo immediately from Sin, therefore Sin is often put for the Engagement to Puniſhment, ſo the Apoſtle's Phraſe, 1 *Cor.* xv. *ult.* may be taken. So then, the Debt of Sin being the Tie to Puniſhment, which follows upon it, the forgiving of Sin can be no other than the acquitting of a Man from that Curſe, ſetting him free from his Debt, his Engagement to ſuffer; and therefore to imagine a Forgiveneſs of Sin with retaining of the Puniſhment, is direct Nonſenſe and a Contradiction.

To paſs the Words of this Requeſt through our Mouths (as the reſt) is an eaſy and common thing, but altogether fruitleſs; but to offer it as a ſpiritual Supplication of the Heart unto God, is a thing done but by a few, and to as many as do offer it ſo, it never returns in vain, but is certainly granted. Now to offer it ſo as a lively ſpiritual Suit unto God, there are neceſſarily ſuppoſed in the Soul that preſents it, theſe things,

1. A clear Conviction and deep Senſe of the Guiltineſs of Sin, both in *general* what this Guiltineſs is, what is that Debt that Sin engages us in, that Miſery to which it binds us over, 1. As the Deprivement of Happineſs, the Loſs of God and his Favour for ever. 2. The endleſs Endurance of his Wrath, and hotteſt Indignation, and all the Anguiſh that that is able to fill the Soul with to all Eternity. Unſufferable, inconceivable Torment! deſcribed to us by ſuch things as we can underſtand, but going infinitely beyond them, *A gnawing Worm that dies not*, and *a Fire that cannot be quenched*, this is the *Portion of the Sinner* from God, and the *Heritage* appointed to him, as *Zophar* ſpeaks. Then in *particular* there muſt be a ſeeing our own Guiltineſs, a Man muſt know himſelf to be nothing elſe but a Maſs of Sin, and ſo Fuel for that Fire; muſt ſee himſelf a Tranſgreſſor of the whole

whole Law of God, and therefore abundantly liable to that Sentence of Death.

2. Upon this Apprehenſion will follow a very earneſt Deſire to be free, and ſuch a Word as that, *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me!* And ſeeing no way either to ſatisfy or eſcape without a free Pardon, the Soul then looks upon that as its only Happineſs, with *David*, *Bleſſed is the Man*, O the Bleſſedneſs of that Man! *whoſe Iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe Sin is covered.*

3. In this Requeſt there is a taking of it as a thing attainable, for it is implied that there is no Impoſſibility in it; and this ariſes from the Promiſes of God, and the Tenor of the Covenant of Grace, and the Mediator of that Covenant revealed in the Word, apprehended only in their general Tenor.

4. It imports a humble Confeſſion of Guiltineſs before the Lord, as follows there, *Pſal.* xxxii. *I acknowledge my Sin*, &c. *and hide not mine Iniquity.* The Way to find God hiding and covering it, he perceived was for himſelf not to hide it, the Way to be acquitted at God's Hand, is for the Soul with Humility and Grief to accuſe itſelf before him.

5. Where there is this ſenſible Knowledge and humble Acknowledgment of Sin and Miſery, and earneſt Deſire of Pardon, then doth a Man truly offer this Suit unto God with ſtrong Affection, *Lord, this is my Requeſt, that my Sin may be forgiven*; and prays it in Faith, which is a more particular laying hold on the Promiſes, believing that he will forgive, and therefore waits for an Anſwer, to hear that *Voice of Joy and Gladneſs*, as *David* ſpeaks; to hear the Word of his Pardon from God ſpoke into his Soul. And for this Cauſe (beſides the Need of daily Pardon for daily Sins) the moſt godly Men have need to renew this Suit, that together with Pardon they may obtain the comfortable Perſuaſion and Aſſurance

of

of it; and though they have ſome Aſſurance, yet there be further Degrees of it poſſible and deſirable, clearer Evidences of Reconcilement and Acceptance with God.

Forgiveneſs itſelf is indeed the main, and is often granted, where the other, the Aſſurance of it, is withheld for a Time, but there is no queſtion that we may, yea, that we ought to deſire it, and ſeek after it. He is bleſſed that is pardoned, though as yet he know it not, yet doubtleſs it abates much of his Happineſs for the Time that he does not know it *.

As the Philoſopher ſays, *The poor Man thinks him happy that is rich, and the ſick Man him that is in Health*; their own Want makes them think ſo. Now this Forgiveneſs of Sin is Happineſs indeed, yet a Man muſt firſt feel the Want of it, before he judge ſo: But here's the Difference when he hath obtain'd it, he ſhall think ſo ſtill; whereas the other being tried, are found to fall ſhort, and do not make any Man happy. *Ariſt.*

Seeing this is a Requeſt of ſo great Moment, may we not wonder at ourſelves, that are ſo cold and indifferent in it? But the true Reaſon of this is, becauſe ſo few are truly ſenſible of this heavy Debt, of the Weight of Sin unpardoned. A Man that feels it not prays thus, not much troubling his Thoughts whether it be granted or no; but he that is indeed preſs'd with the Burden of Sin, cries in earneſt, *Lord, forgive*. *David* knew what he ſaid, when he called him *bleſſed whoſe Sin is forgiven*, the Word is, that is *unloaded of his Sin*. He was a King, and a great Captain, but he ſays not, he is a bleſſed Man that wears a Crown, or that is ſucceſsful in War, but he whoſe Sin is taken off his Shoulders; whatſoever he is otherwiſe, he is a happy Man; it is in vain

* *Non eſt beatus, eſſe qui ſe non putet.*

vain to offer a Conſcience groaning under Sin any thing elſe, until it be eaſed of that. If you ſhould ſee a Man lying grovelling under ſome Weight that is ready to preſs him to death, and ſhould bring ſweet Muſick to him, and cover a Table with Delicates before him, but let him ly ſtill under his Burden, could he (think you) take any Pleaſure in thoſe Things? Were it not rather to mock him to uſe him ſo?

And though we feel it not as troubled Conſciences do, yet we are truly miſerable in all Enjoyments, until this Forgiveneſs be obtain'd. To what Purpoſe daily Bread, yea what is the greateſt Abundance of all outward Things, but a gliſtering Miſery, if this be wanting? But he that is once forgiven, and received into Favour with God, what can befal *him* amiſs? Though he hath no more of the World but daily Bread, and of the coarſeſt ſort, he hath a continual Feaſt within; as he that ſaid, *Brown Bread and the Goſpel is good Fare.* Now the Goſpel is the Doctrine of this Forgiveneſs of Sin, and is therefore ſo ſweet to an humbled Sinner; yea, though a Man have not only a ſmall Portion of earthly Comforts, but be under divers Afflictions and Chaſtiſements, yet this makes him chearful in all, as *Luther* ſaid, *Feri Domine*, &c. uſe me as thou wilt, ſeeing thou haſt forgiven my Sin, all is well.

Laſtly, As there muſt be earneſt Deſire in the Requeſt, ſo withal firm Belief; *ask in Faith.* If once thou art become a humble Suiter for Mercy, and that is the great Deſire of thy Heart, that God would take away thy Sin, and be reconciled to thee; then know that he will not caſt back thy Petition in Diſpleaſure, now he is gracious, and whatſoever thou haſt been, conſider what he is. Doth he receive any for any thing in themſelves? What is the Cauſe he pardons any, is it not for his own Name's ſake?

ſake? *Iſa.* xliii. 25. And will not that Reaſon ſerve for thee as much as others? Will it not avail for many Sins, as well as for few? Haſt thou multiplied Sin often, abuſed his Mercy, but now mourneſt before him for it? then he will multiply to pardon, *Iſa.* lv. 7. *Jer.* iii. 1. Thou haſt rebelled much, but he is thy Father, and hath the Bowels of a Father to a repenting Child: And this Stile we give him in this Prayer, as fitly urging all our Suits, *Father, forgive us our Sins*; therefore forgive, becauſe thou art our Father. And then conſider, that he that puts this Petition amongſt the reſt in our Mouths, hath ſatisfied for Believers, paid all their Scores, and anſwered Juſtice to the full, and in him we are forgiven: It is a free Forgiveneſs to us, tho' he hath paid for it; and he himſelf was freely given to us, to undertake and ſatisfy for us. Yet let not any thus embolden themſelves to ſin; this were the groſſeſt Impudence, to come to crave Pardon of Sin while we delight in it, and to deſire it to be forgiven while we have no mind to part with it and forſake it; for this Privilege belongs only to repenting and returning Sinners.

As we forgive our Debtors.] This is added, both as a fit Motive for us to uſe with God, and a ſuitable Duty that he requires of us: The former we may perceive in the Manner that St. *Luke* hath it, *For we alſo*, ſays he, *&c.* "Thou, Lord, requireſt of us to "forgive others, and thou workeſt it in ſome of us "to do ſo; how much more then may we hope that "thou wilt forgive us? If there be any ſuch Good-"neſs in us, it is from thee, and therefore is in-"finitely more in thyſelf, as the Ocean of Good-"neſs."

Again, this is likewiſe a very profitable Argument to move us to this Duty, as we ſee clearly by our Saviour's returning to ſpeak of it after the Prayer:

It is not only bound upon us by his Precept, but by our Prayer.

This (*as*) juſt as before in the third Petition, means not Equality in the Degree, but Conformity in the Thing.

Now the Requeſt running thus, they that do not forgive their Brethren, turn it into a moſt heavy Curſe to themſelves, and in effect pray daily, *Lord, never forgive me my Sin*; and whether they ſay thus or no, he will do thus, if we be ſuch Fools as not to accept of ſuch an Agreement. He hath infinite Debt upon our Heads, that we ſhall never be able to pay; now though there is no Proportion, yet he is graciouſly pleaſed without further Reckoning to forgive us all, and diſcharge us fully, if we accept (as it were) of this his Letter of Exchange, and for his ſake forgive our Brethren the few Pence that at the moſt they can be owing us, in lieu of the thouſands of Talents that he acquits to us. And by this, as our certain Evidence, we may be aſſured of our Pardon, and rejoice in it, as our Saviour after clearly affirms; and therefore the contrary (which he likewiſe tells us) may well take our Debates, and Hatreds, and Deſires of Revenge, as a Counterſign, teſtifying to us, that we are not forgiven at God's Hands.

And think not to ſatisfy him with ſuperficial Forgiveneſſes and Reconcilements: Would we be content of ſuch Pardon from God, to have only a preſent Forbearance of Revenge, or that he ſhould not quarrel with us, but no further Friendſhip with him; that he ſhould either uſe Strangeneſs with us, and not ſpeak to us, or only for Faſhion's ſake? And yet ſuch are many of our Reconcilements with our Brethren. God's way of forgiving is thorough and hearty, both to forgive and to forget, *Jer.* xxxi. and if thine be not ſo, thou haſt no Portion in his.

What

What a baſe miſerable Humour is this ſame Deſire of Revenge, this Spirit of Malice that poſſeſſes Men, and think themſelves brave in it, that they forgive no Injuries, can put up no Affronts, as they ſpeak! *Solomon* was of another Mind, and he was a King, and a wiſe King, and knew well enough what Honour meant; *It is the Glory of a Man to paſs by a Tranſgreſſion*, ſaid he. And we ſee inferior Magiſtrates and Officers may puniſh, but it is a Part of the Prerogative of Kings to pardon; it is Royal to forgive, yea it is Divine, it is to be like God, *Matth.* v. *Be you perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect*; and the Perfection is, *do good to them that perſecute you*, &c. *as he cauſeth the Sun to ſhine on the juſt and unjuſt.*

There is more true Pleaſure in forgiving, than ever any Man found in Revenge. *Fr. Deſales* ſaid, "That whereas Men think it ſo hard a Thing to "forgive a Wrong, he found it ſo ſweet, that if the "contrary were commanded him, he would have "much ado to obey it." Were the Law of Love written in our Hearts, it would be thus with us; it would teach us effectually to forgive others, if we knew and found in our Experience the boundleſs Love of God in forgiving us.

And lead us not into Temptation, &c.] As the Doctrine of Divine Mercy, miſtaken and abuſed by carnal Minds, emboldens them to ſin; ſo being rightly apprehended and applied, there is nothing more powerful to poſſeſs the Heart with Indignation againſt Sin, and Love of Holineſs: So that this Requeſt agrees moſt fitly with the former; where that is preſented aright, the Heart will be no leſs ſincere and earneſt in this other. The Guiltineſs of Sin, and the prevailing Power of it, are the two Evils that the Godly feel more than all other Preſſures in the World; Deliverance from both is joint-

ly promiſed in the New Covenant, *Jer.* xxxi. and here jointly entreated in theſe two Petitions. We ſhall explain,

1. What this *Temptation* and *Evil* is.

2. What is meant by *not lead into* it, and to *deliver*.

Temptation.] In the Original Πειρασμὸς. a Trial, that which gives Proof of a Man's Strength and of his Diſpoſition, draws forth what is within him. And thus in moſt Things we meet withal in the World, there is ſome *tempting* Faculty to try us what we are, on the uſing of them; but eſpecially ſuch Things as are more eminent in their Nature, that have much Power with us. As eminent Place and publick Charge try both the Ability and Integrity of Men, Afflictions try the Faith and Stability of Mens Minds. Injuries try whether they are truly meek and patient or no; they ſtir the Water that was poſſibly clear at Top, and ſo try whether it be not muddy at the Bottom *.

But by *Temptation* here are meant, Occaſions and Provocations to Sin. So likewiſe the Word (*Evil*) in the other Clauſe, is not to be taken for Afflictions and Croſſes, but for the *Evil of Sin*, or for that *evil one*, as he is called, 1 *Joh.* ii. 13. and that particularly in relation to the Evil of Sin, wherein he hath ſo frequent and ſo great a hand.

There be outward Things that are not in themſelves evil, and yet prove Temptations to us, becauſe they meet with a depraved corrupt Heart in us; as Riches, and Honour, and Beauty, *&c.* and to Intemperance, dainty Meats, or the Wine *when it is red in the Cup*, as *Solomon* ſpeaks; and upon theſe, Men ſometimes turn over the Blame of their Diſorders, but moſt fooliſhly.

Other Temptations and Tempters there be with-

ou;

* *Natura vexata prodit ſeipſam.*

out us, that are themſelves evil, and by tempting partake of our Sin; the profane Example and Cuſtoms of the World, ungodly Men by their Practices, and Counſels, and Enticements, drawing others to Sin, putting others into the ſame Mire wherein they are wallowing.

But the moſt effectual Tempter of all, is that which the Apoſtle St. *James* gives up as the chief, and without which indeed none other could prevail, *Every Man is tempted of his own Concupiſcence*; whoſoever it is that begets it, that is the Womb wherein all Sin is conceived, and that *brings it forth*, as he there adds; yea this were able of itſelf to be fruitful in Sin, though there were not a Devil to tempt it to it, and doth no doubt often tempt us without his Help.

Yet, becauſe he is ſo continually buſied in this Work, is ſo conſtant a Stickler in the greateſt part of Sins in the World, therefore it is not unlikely that this is particularly meant of him.

Howſoever, he is out of doubt the greateſt of all outward Tempters, (and therefore it is pertinent to conſider his Share in them) the moſt skilful, the moſt active and diligent, and he that manages all other kind of Temptations againſt us, both ſuch as are without us in the World, and, ſuch as are within us, he works upon our own Corruption, ſtirring and blowing it up by his Suggeſtions, and ſometimes throwing in Balls of his own infernal Fire, that are grievous and abominable to the Soul into which he caſts them. It is his Name and Profeſſion, ὁ πειράζων, that great Pirate, that robs upon all Seas, that is every where catching the Souls of Men. And he is well ſeen in his Trade, a knowing Spirit, that manifeſted his Skill ſhrewdly in his firſt Eſſay againſt Man, that Serpent's firſt Poiſon killed the whole Race of Mankind; and now he is perfected by long Experience and

and Practice, hath his Methods, as Arts after a time are drawn into Method. He hath his Topicks, his ſeveral Sorts of Temptations for ſeveral Tempers, and hath great Inſight into the Subject he is to work upon, and ſo fits the one to the other.

The Profane that will be eaſily drawn to the groſſeſt Sins, he is not at the Pains to find out other ways for them, but hurries them along in that high way to Deſtruction, uſing his Advantage either of their groſs Ignorance or Hardneſs of Heart, &c. Others that are reſolved to live outwardly blameleſs, he endeavours to take and hold faſt to himſelf by Pride, and Self-love, and Malice, and Covetouſneſs, by Formality in Religion, Unbelief, which are things, though ſmaller wrought than ſome others, yet that are as ſtrong, and hold Men as faſt to be led captive at his Will.

And the Godly, becauſe they are eſcaped and ſet free from his Tyranny, and he is deſperate of reducing them, yet becauſe he can do no more, he is ſure to be a perpetual Vexation and Trouble to them, ſo far as he is let looſe; he is moſt unwearied in his Aſſaults, gives them no Reſpite, neither when he gains upon them, nor when he is foiled and repulſed. Let us next conſider,

Οὐδὲ νικῶν δὲ νικώμενος.

2. What the Requeſt is, — not to be *led* into Temptation,—and, to be *delivered*.

Lead us not.] Not that God doth ſolicite a Man to Sin, for that is moſt contrary to his moſt pure Nature, as St. *James* tells us plainly, *He is neither ſo tempted, nor tempts he any*: But his leading into Temptation is briefly, 1. To permit a Man to be tempted. 2. To withdraw his Grace, and ſo deliver up a Man into the Hand or Power of the Temptation. Now this is that we pray, that the Lord be pleaſed either to bear off Aſſaults from us, and ſuffer

us

us not to be tempted; or if he let Temptation looſe upon us, yet to give us the better, to order it ſo that it overcome us not. That which is here meant by leading, or carrying us into Temptation, is the prevailing of it, or leading us unto a Foil; and this we pray, that he would not do, that if he do bring us into the Conflict of a Temptation he would not leave us there, but bring us fair off again; and thus the whole Petition runs, *lead us not, but deliver us.* And in this it is, that he would furniſh us with his own Grace, the holy Habits of Grace to be within us, as a conſtant Garriſon. And then, that either he countermand our Enemy from aſſaulting, or that they be ſuch as overmatch not the Strength he hath given us, but may be below it; or that he ſend us the auxiliary Strength of ſupervenient aſſiſting Grace to that we have, that howſoever the Forces that come againſt us may be turned backward, and we may have the Comfort, and he the Glory of our Victories.

So then in this we are taught, 1. To know the Danger wherein we are; that we live in the midſt of Enemies, and ſuch as are ſtrong and ſubtile, that we have the Prince of Darkneſs plotting againſt us, and the treacherous Corruption of our own Hearts ready to keep Correſpondence with him, and betray us to him. That he hath Gins and Snares laid for us in all our Ways, *Laqueos ubique, laqueos in cibo & potu*, &c. *Aug. Med.* in our Solitude and in our Converſe, in our eating and drinking, yea Snares in our ſpiritual Exerciſe, our Hearing, Preaching, Prayer, *&c.* and therefore as he here teaches us to pray againſt them, we muſt join that, to *watch* againſt them. 2. To be ſenſible of our own Weakneſs and Inſufficiency, either for avoiding or overcoming theſe Dangers. 3. To know the All-ſufficient Strength of God, his Sovereign Power over all adverſe Powers, that they are all under his Command, ſo that he can keep

keep them off us, or ſubdue them under us as he pleaſeth, and ſo to have our Recourſe to this, and reſt in it. The firſt of theſe Conſiderations, if it take with us, will ſtir us up to Watchfulneſs, and the other two will perſuade to Prayer; and theſe are the two great Preſervatives againſt Temptation that our Saviour preſcribes, *Watch and pray, leſt you enter into Temptation: Watch*, how can we ſleep ſecure, and ſo many Enemies that ſleep not? If we pray and watch not, we tempt God, and we lead ourſelves into Temptation. It is our Duty (mock the Word who will) to walk exactly or preciſely, ἀκριβῶς, to look to every Step, to beware of the leaſt Sins: For they, 1. By multitude make up a great Weight. 2. They prove uſually Introductions to greater Sins; admit but ſome inordinate Deſire into your Heart that you account a ſmall Matter, and it is a hundred to one but it ſhall prove a little Thief got in, to open the Door to a Number of greater; as the *Rabbins* ſpeak, a leſs evil brings a Man into the Hands of a greater *.

2. Avoid not only Sins but the Incentives and Occaſions to Sin; as St. *Chryſoſtom* obſerves well that of our Saviour, *when they ſhall ſay, here is Chriſt and there is Chriſt*, he ſays not, *believe them not*, but *go not forth to ſee*; and *Solomon*'s Inſtruction for avoiding the Allurements of the ſtrange Woman, ſays not only, *go not in, but come not near the Door of her Houſe.* The Way of Sin is down hill †; a Man cannot ſtop where he would, and he that will be tampering with dangerous Occaſions, in confidence of his Reſolution, ſhall find himſelf often carried beyond his Purpoſe. If you pray, then watch too; but as that Word commands our Diligence, ſo this imports our Weakneſs in ourſelves, and our Strength to

* *Levius malum inducit in manus gravioris.* Druſ.
† *Motus in proclivi.*

to be in another, that as we watch we muſt pray, and without this we ſhall watch in vain, and be a Prey to our Enemy. Truly had we no Power beyond our own, we might give over, and be hopeleſs of coming through to Salvation, ſo many Enemies and Hazards in the Way. *Alas*! might a Chriſtian ſay, looking upon the Multitude of Temptations without, and Corruptions within himſelf, and the Weakneſs of the Grace he hath, *How can this be? ſhall I ever attain my Journey's End?* But again when he looks upward, and lifts his Eyes above his Difficulties, beholds the Strength of God engaged for him, directs his Prayers to him for Help, and is aſſured to find it; this upholds him, and anſwers all. There is a roaring Lion that ſeeks to devour, but there is a ſtrong reſcuing Lion, *the Lion of the Tribe of* Judah, that will deliver. *The God of Peace*, ſays the Apoſtle, *will bruiſe Satan under your Feet ſhortly.* He ſays not, *we* ſhall bruiſe him under our Feet, but *God* ſhall do it; yet he ſays not, he ſhall bruiſe him under *his own* Feet, but under *yours*; the Victory ſhall be ours, though wrought by him; and he ſhall do it *ſhortly*, wait a while and it ſhall be done; and *the God of Peace*, becauſe he is the God of Peace, he ſhall ſubdue that grand Diſturber of your Peace, and ſhall give you a perfect Victory, and after it, endleſs Peace; he ſhall free you of his Trouble and Moleſtation. Grace is a Stranger here, and therefore hardly uſed, and hated by many Foes; but there is a Promiſe of a new Heaven and a new Earth, where dwells Righteouſneſs, there it ſhall be at home, and quiet, no Spoiling nor Robbery in all that holy Mountain.

For thine is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

This Pattern (we know) is the Line under which all our Prayers ought to move, all our Requeſts to

be conform to it; and are certainly out of their Way, when they decline and wander from it. And if we obſerve it, we may clearly perceive it is a circular Line; as indeed the Exerciſe of Prayer is a heavenly Motion, circular as that of the Heavens, begins and ends in the ſame Point, the Glory of that God to whom we pray, and who is the God that heareth Prayer. In that Point this Prayer begins, and here ends in it, ſo that our Requeſts that concern ourſelves are caſt in in the middle, that all our Deſires may move within this Circle; though the things we pray for concern ourſelves, yet are not to terminate in ourſelves but in him, who is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and End of all things; to deſire not only the Bleſſings of this Life, but the Bleſſedneſs of the Life to come, more for his Glory than for our own Good.

This is genuine and pure Love of God, in the Pardon of our Sins and Salvation, to rejoice more in the Glory of divine Mercy, than in our own perſonal Happineſs; thus it ſhall be with us, when we ſhall be put in Poſſeſſion of it, and we ought to aſpire to that Meaſure of the ſame Mind that can be attained here, while we are in the Deſire and Hopes of it.

For thine is the Kingdom.] Though this Clauſe is left out in divers Tranſlations, and wanting in ſome *Greek* Copies, yet it is ſo agreeable to the Nature of Prayer, and the Perfection of this Prayer, that we ought not to let it paſs unconſidered.

There is in it an Enforcement of our Prayer, but eſpecially it is a Return of Praiſe; " Good Reaſon " we deſire earneſtly the ſanctifying of thy Name, and " coming of thy Kingdom, and Obedience to thy " Will, ſeeing theſe are ſo peculiarly due to thee, " namely, Kingdom, and Power, and Glory; and " ſeeing thou art ſo great and rich a King, may we " not crave with Confidence at thy Hands all need-

" ful

" ful good things to be beſtowed on us, and that all " Evil may be averted from us, that we may find " thee gracious to us, both in giving and forgiving; " and as in forgiving us the Guiltineſs of Sin, ſo in " freeing us from the Power of Sin, and preſerving " us from the Power of our ſpiritual Enemies that " would draw us into Sin? We are under thy Roy- " al Protection, we are thy Subjects, yea thy Chil- " dren, thou art our King and Father, ſo that thy " Honour is engaged for our Defence. Whatſoever " Sum our Debts amount to, they are not too great " for ſuch a King to forgive, they cannot riſe above " thy Royal Goodneſs; and whatſoever be our " Enemies, all their Force is not above thy " Sceptre; though they be ſtrong, too ſtrong for " us, yet thou art much more too ſtrong for " them, for Power is thine; and this we know, that " all the good thou doſt us, will bring back Glory " to thy Name, and it is that we moſt deſire, and " that which is thy Due; the *Glory is thine.*"

Thus we ſee all our Places of Argument for our Requeſts are in God, none of them in ourſelves; as we find this in the Prayers of the Prophets, *for thine own Glory*, and *for thine own Name's Sake*; nothing in ourſelves to move God by, but Abundance of Miſery, and that moves not but by Reaſon of his Bounty; ſo ſtill the Cauſe of his hearing, and the Argument of our entreating, is in himſelf alone. Were it not thus, how could we hope to prevail with him? yea, how durſt we offer to come unto him? It is well for us there is enough in himſelf both to encourage us to come, and to furniſh us with Motives to perſuade him by, that we come not in vain. *Moſes* had not a Word to ſay for the People in themſelves, ſuch was their Carriage, his Mouth was ſtopt that Way, yet he doth not let go this, " What wilt thou do with " thy *mighty Name?* it is true they have treſpaſſed,

" yet if thou deſtroy them, thy Name will ſuffer, " Lord conſider and regard that, and we know the Suc- " ceſs of it." Thus a Chriſtian for himſelf, " Lord, " I am moſt unworthy of all thoſe things I requeſt " of thee, but whatſoever I am, thou art a liberal " and mighty King, and it is thy Glory to do good " freely, therefore it is that I come unto thee; my " Neceſſities drive me to thee, and thy Goodneſs " draws me, and the poorer and wretcheder I am, " the greater will be thy Glory in helping me."

But it is withal an extolling and praiſing the Greatneſs of God, and ſo we are to conſider it.

Thine is the Kingdom.] " Other Kings and King- " doms there be, but they are as nothing, they deſerve " not the naming in compariſon of thine; they are but " Kings of little Mole-hills, to the Bounds of thy Do- " minion; the greateſt Kingdoms of the World are " but ſmall Parcels of this Globe of Earth, and itſelf " all together, to the vaſt Circumference of the Hea- " vens, is as nothing, loſes all ſenſible Greatneſs. " This Point that Men are ſo buſy dividing among " them with Fire and Sword, what if one Man had " the Sovereignty of it all? he and Kingdom both " were nothing to thine; for Sea and Land, Earth " and Heaven, and all the Creatures in them all, the " whole, all is thine; thou art Lord of Heaven and " Earth, and therefore the Kingdom is thine. As " all other Kingdoms are leſs than thine, ſo they " hold of thine, thine is ſupreme; all the Crowns " and Scepters of the Earth hang at thy Footſtool." All Kings owe their Homage to this great King, and he diſpoſeth of their Crowns abſolutely and uncontrolled as he will, he enthrones and dethrones at his Pleaſure, throws down one and ſets up another; as we have a great Monarch confeſſing it at length, upon his own Experience, being brought down from his

his Throne, on purpoſe to learn this Leſſon, and was ſeven Years in learning on't, *Dan.* iv. 34.

The Power.] The Creatures have among them ſeveral Degrees and ſeveral Kinds of Power, but none of them, nor all of them together have all Power, this is God's. He is All-powerful in himſelf, primitively powerful, and all the Power of the Creatures is derived from him; he is the Fountain of Power: So that whatſoever Power he hath given unto Men, or any other Creature, he hath not given away from himſelf; it is ſtill in himſelf more than in them, and at his Pleaſure he can call it back, and withdraw the Influence of it, and then they remain weak and powerleſs. And when he gives them Power, he uſeth and diſpoſeth of both them and their Power as ſeems him good; therefore his Stile is, *the Lord of Hoſts.* He can command more Armies than all the Kings and Princes of the Earth, from the moſt excellent to the meaneſt of the Ceatures, all are his trained Bands, from the Hoſt of glorious Spirits, to the very Armies of Graſhoppers and Flies; and you know, that as an Angel was employed againſt the *Egyptians*, ſo likewiſe theſe contemptible Creatures were upon Service there too, and being armed with Commiſſion, and with Power from God, did perform the Service upon which they were ſent ſo effectually, that the wiſeſt of Heathens were forced to confeſs, *this is the Finger of God.*

This is the Lord to whom we addreſs our Prayers, that cannot fail in any thing for want of Power, for he doth what he will in Heaven and in Earth.

Glory.] In theſe two conſiſts mainly the Eminency of Kings, in their Power and their Majeſty; but they exceed not the meaneſt of their Subjects, ſo far as this King ſurpaſſeth the greateſt of them in both, *Pſal.* xciii. 1. *Clothed with* both *Majeſty and Strength.* They are often reſiſted, and cut ſhort of their Deſigns

ſigns for Want of ſufficient Power, and are the beſt of them often driven to Straits; ſometimes Men, ſometimes Money or Munition, or ſome other neceſſary Help is wanting, and ſo their Enterprizes fall behind; but this King can challenge and defy all Oppoſitions; *I work*, (ſays he) *and who ſhall let it?*

And as their Power, ſo their Majeſty and Glory is infinitely ſhort of his; he *is the King of Glory*, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſtiles him, alone truly glorious, both in the Excellency of his own Nature, and the extrinſical Glory that ariſes to him out of his Works. Of the former we can know but little here, for that Light wherein he dwells is to us inacceſſible; but this we know, that he is infinitely above all the Praiſes even of thoſe that do behold him. Likewiſe how unſpeakable is that Glory that ſhines in his Works! in the framing of the whole World, and in the upholding and ruling of it from the Beginning, in which appear the two former that are here aſcribed to him, his *Kingdom* and his *Power*, and ſo this third, his *Glory*, ſprings out of both. Then if we conſider the glorious Attendance that is continually about his Throne, as the Scriptures deſcribe it to us, it drowns all the Pomp of earthly Thrones and Courts in their higheſt Degree, See *Apoc.* iv.

For ever.] This Kingdom, and Power, and Glory of God, beſides their tranſcendent Greatneſs, have this Advantage beyond all other Kingdoms, and Power, and Glory, that his are *for ever and ever*; all other are periſhing, nothing but Pageants and Shows that appear for a while, and paſs along and vaniſh. It was a wiſe Word of a King, (eſpecially at ſuch a Time) when he was riding in a ſtately Triumph, and ask'd by one of his Courtiers, thinking to pleaſe him, What is wanting here? he anſwered, *Continuance.* Where are all the magnifick Kings that have reign'd in former Ages? Where is their

Power

Power and their Pomp? Is it not paſt like a Dream? And not only are the Kings gone, but the Kingdoms themſelves, the greateſt in the World fallen to nothing; they had their Time of riſing, and again of declining, and are buried in the Duſt: That golden-headed Image had brittle Feet, and that was the Ruin and Break of it all. But this Kingdom of the moſt High is an everlaſting Kingdom, and his Glory and Power abide for ever. Not only Things on Earth decay, but the very *Heavens wax old as a Garment*, (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *but thou, O Lord, art ſtill the ſame, and thy Years have no End.*

1. It is a Thing of very great Importance for us to have our Hearts eſtabliſh'd in the Belief of theſe Things, and to be frequent in remembring and conſidering them; to know that the Kingdom is the Lord's, that he ſovereignly rules the World, and all Things in it, and particularly the great Affairs of his Church; that he is the mighty God, and therefore that there is no Power, or Wiſdom, nor Counſel of Men, able to prevail againſt him; and that in thoſe Things wherein his Glory ſeems to ſuffer for the preſent, it ſhall gain and be advanced in the Cloſure.

2. Let us always, and in all Things, return this to him as his peculiar Due; "Thine is the Glory, it "belongs to thee, and to none other," *Deo quæ Dei ſunt.*

3. Let us think moſt reverently of God: Oh that we could attain to eſteeming Thoughts of him, to think more of his Greatneſs and Excellency beyond all the World! It is our great Folly to admire any thing but God, this is becauſe we are ignorant of him; certainly he knows not God, that thinks any thing great beſide him.

Amen.] In this Word concenter all the Requeſts, and are put up together; *ſo be it.* And there is in it with-

withal (as all obſerve) a Profeſſion of Confidence that it ſhall be ſo. It is from one Root with theſe Words that ſignify *Believing* and *Truth*, the Truth of God's Promiſes perſuades Belief, and it perſuades to hope for a gracious Anſwer of Prayer. And this is the excellent Advantage of the Prayer of Faith, that it quiets and eſtabliſhes the Heart in God. Whatſoever be its Eſtate and Deſire, when once he hath put his Petition into God's Hand, he reſts content in holy Security and Aſſurance concerning the Anſwer, refers it to the Wiſdom and Love of God, how and when he will anſwer; not doubting that whatſoever it be, and whenſoever, it ſhall both be gracious and ſeaſonable. But the Reaſon why ſo few of us find that Sweetneſs and Comfort that is in Prayer, is, becauſe the true Nature and Uſe of it is ſo little known.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE *Ten Commandments.*

EXOD. XX. 1.

And God ſpake all theſe Words, ſaying.

IT is the Character of the bleſſed Man, and the Way of Bleſſedneſs, *to delight in the Law of God*, Pſal. i. And becauſe the Eye is often upon that whereon the Affection and Delight of the Heart is ſet; the Sign of that Delight in the Law, is to have the Eye of the Mind much upon it, *to meditate on it Day and Night.* And that we may know this is not, as the Study of many Things are, empty Speculation and fruitleſs barren Delight, we are further taught the Soul (as fixed in this Delight and Meditation) is a Tree well planted, and anſwerably fruitful. The Mind that is ſet upon this Law, is fitly ſet for bearing Fruit, *Planted by the Rivers of Water*; and is really fruitful, *Bringeth forth its Fruit in his Seaſon.*

If this holds true of the Law in the largeſt Senſe, taken for the whole Will of God revealed in his Word, it is no doubt particularly verified in that which more particularly bears the Name of *the Law*; this ſame Summary of the Rule of Man's Life, delivered by the Lord himſelf, after ſo ſingular a Manner, both by Word and Writ.

So then the Explication of it being needful for the Ignorant, it will be likewiſe profitably delightful for thoſe that be moſt knowing and beſt acquainted with it; it is a rich Mine, that we can never dig to the Bottom of. He is called the *bleſſed Man*, that is ſtill digging and ſeeking further into the Riches of it, *Meditating on it Day and Night*. His Work going forward in the Night, when others ceaſe from working.

We have in the Creed, the Object of Faith; in the Law, the Exerciſe and Trial of Love: *For Love is the fulfilling of the Law*; and, *If ye love me, keep my Commandments*, ſaith our Saviour. And Prayer is the breathing of Hope, or, as they call it, *Interpretatio ſpei*. Thus in theſe three Summaries are the Matter of theſe three prime *Theological* Virtues, *Faith*, *Hope* and *Charity*.

The Law rightly underſtood addreſſes us to the Articles of our Faith: For ſeeing the Diſproportion of our beſt Obedience to the Exactneſs of the Law, this drives us to ſeek Salvation in the Goſpel by believing; and our natural Inability to believe, drives us to Prayer, that we may obtain Faith and Perſeverance in it, at his Hands who is both the firſt Author and Finiſher of our Faith.

The Preparation enjoined the People, teacheth the Holineſs of this Law; the Fire, and Thunder, and Lightning, and upon theſe, the Fear of the People, teſtify the Greatneſs and Majeſty of the Law-giver, and withal his Power to puniſh the Tranſgreſſors of it, and Juſtice that will puniſh; that as he ſhewed his Preſence by Fire ſeen in delivering this Law, ſo he is (as the Apoſtle teacheth us, alluding to this) *a conſuming Fire* to them that neglect and diſobey it. The Limits ſet about the Mount, that they might not approach it, even after all their Endeavour of ſanctifying and preparing, read Humility to us, teaching

ing us our great Diſtance from the Holineſs of our God, even when we are moſt holy and exacteſt in our Preparations. Next,

Sobriety, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, not to pry into hidden Things *, to hear what is revealed to us, and commanded us, and to exerciſe ourſelves in that. *Hidden Things belong unto God*, &c. And *laſtly*, That the Law of itſelf is the Miniſtration of Death, and hath nothing but Terror in it, till the Meſſiah the Mediator appear, and the Soul by his prfect Obedience be accounted obedient to the Law; but we muſt not inſiſt on this now.

God ſpake.] The Preface is twofold. 1. That of *Moſes*. 2. Of God himſelf.

Theſe Words.] Ten Words, *Exod.* xxxiv. 28. and *Deut.* v. 22. He added no more. Hence we may learn, (1.) The Perfection of this Law, that no more was needful to be added. (2.) The Excellency of it, being ſo ſhort and yet ſo perfect. For as it is the Excellency of all Speech, as of Coin (as *Plutarch* hath it) to contain much in little, moſt Value in ſmalleſt Quantity; ſo eſpecially of Laws that they be brief and full.

That we may the better conceive of the Perfection of this Law, we muſt not forget theſe Rules that Divines give for the underſtanding of it in its due Latitude. (1.) That the Prohibitions of Sin contain the Commands of the contrary Good, otherwiſe the Number of Precepts would have been too great. And on the contrary, (2.) Under the Name of any one Sin, all homogeneous, or Sins of that kind are forbidden. (3.) All the Inducements and Occaſions of Sin, things that come near a Breach, to be avoided; that which the *Rabbins* call the *Hedge* of the Law, not to be broken. They that do always that they lawfully may, ſometimes do more. (4.) 'Tis

* *Scrutator Majeſtatis opprimetur à gloria.*

ſpiritual, hath that Prerogative above all human Laws, reaches the Heart, and all the Motions of it as well as Words and Actions. This ſupreme Law-giver alone can ſee the Behaviour of the Heart, and alone is able to puniſh all that offend, ſo much as in Thought. It were a vain thing for Men to give Laws to any, more than that they can require Account of and correct, which is only the Superfice and Outſide of human Actions. But he that made the Heart, doth not only give his Law to it, but to *it* principally, and examines all Actions there in their Source and Beginning, and therefore oftentimes that which Men applaud and reward, and do well in ſo doing, he juſtly hates and puniſhes.

God ſpake.] All that was ſpoken by his Meſſengers the Prophets with Warrant from him, was his Word, they but the Trumpets which the Breath of his Mouth, his Spirit, made to ſound as it pleaſed him; but this his moral Law he privileged with his own immediate Delivery. Men may give ſome few Rules for Society, and civil Life, by the dark Light that remains in natural Conſciences; but ſuch a Rule as may direct a Man to anſwer his natural End, and lead him to God, muſt come from himſelf. All the pureſt and wiſeſt Laws that Men have compiled cannot reach that, they can go no higher in their Courſe, than they are in their Spring, *That which is from the Earth is earthly*, ſaith our Saviour.

He added to this ſpeaking, the *writing* of them likewiſe himſelf in Tables of Stone, that they might abide, and be conveyed to after Ages. At firſt they were written in the Heart of Man by God's own Hand; but as the firſt Tables of Stone fell and were broken, ſo was it with Man's Heart, by his Fall his Heart was broken, and ſcattered amongſt the earthly periſhing things, that was before whole and entire to his Maker; and ſo the Characters of that Law written

ten in it, were ſo ſhivered and ſcattered, that they could not be perfectly and diſtinctly read in it; therefore it pleaſed God to renew that Law after this Manner, by a moſt ſolemn Delivery with audible Voice, and then by writing it on Tables of Stone. And this is not all, but this ſame Law he doth write anew in the Hearts of his Children.

Why it pleaſed him to defer this ſolemn Promulgation of the Law to this time, and at this time to give it to a ſelect People only, theſe are *arcana imperii* indeed, which we are not to ſearch into, but to magnify his Goodneſs to us, that he hath ſhewed us the Path of Life, revealing to us both the Precepts of this Law, and the Grace and Promiſes of the Goſpel.

It was the All-wiſe God that ſpake all theſe Words, therefore he knew well his own Aim and Purpoſe in them, and doth certainly attain it.

It was not indeed that this Law might be the adequate and compleat Means of Man's Happineſs, that by perfect Obedience to it he might be ſaved; for the Law is weak for this, not in itſelf, but thro' the Fleſh, *Rom.* viii. 3. altogether impoſſible for it alone to ſave us, becauſe impoſſible for us to fulfil it.

But it doth profit us much if we look aright upon it. 1. It diſcovers us to ourſelves, and ſo humbles us, frees us from the Pride that is ſo natural to us in the midſt of our great Poverty and Wretchedneſs: For when we ſee how pure the Law is, and we compared with it to be all Filthineſs and Defilement, *Our beſt Righteouſneſs*, (as *Iſaiah* ſays) *as filthy Rags*; this cauſeth us to abhor ourſelves: Whereas naturally we are abuſed with Self-love, and Self-flattery ariſing from it. The Point of the Law (as they in the *Acts* were ſaid to be pricked in their Hearts) pricks the Heart, that is ſwelled and puffed up with

Pride,

Pride, and makes it fall low in Senſe of Vileneſs.

2. As this Diſcovery humbles us in ourſelves, it drives us out of ourſelves. This Glaſs ſhewing us our Pollution, ſends us to *the Fountain opened*; when we perceive that by the Sentence of the Law, there is nothing for us but Death, this makes us hearken diligently to the News of Redemption and Pardon proclaimed in the Goſpel, and haſtens us to the Mediator of the new Covenant. As the Spouſe was then ſingularly rejoiced to find her Beloved, when ſhe had been beaten and hardly uſed by reproaching; the Soul is then gladeſt to meet with Chriſt, when it is hardeſt buffetted with the Terrors and Threatening of the Law.

His Promiſe of Eaſe and Refreſhment ſounds ſweet after the Thunderings and Lightnings of Mount *Sinai*. A Man will never go to Chriſt ſo long as he is not convinced of Miſery without him, of Impotency in himſelf, and in all others to help him.

3. It reſtrains the Wickedneſs even of ungodly Men; the Brightneſs of it makes them ſometimes aſhamed of thoſe Works of Darkneſs, which otherwiſe they would commit without Check; and the Terrors of it affright them ſometimes from that, which they would otherwiſe commit without Shame.

4. But chiefly it ſerves for a Rule, and Square of Life to the Godly, *A Light to their Feet*, (as *David* ſays) *and a Lantern to their Paths*. Either they have no Rule of Life, (which is impious and unreaſonable to think) or this is it. Chriſt came not to diſſolve it, but to accompliſh and eſtabliſh it; and he did carefully free it from the injurious Gloſſes of the *Phariſees*, and taught the right Senſe and Force of it, *Matth.* v. He obeyed it both in doing and ſuffering, both performing what it requires, and in our ſtead undergoing what it pronounces againſt thoſe that perform it not. It is a Promiſe primely intended for the

the Days of the Goſpel, as the Apoſtle applies, *I will write my Law in their Hearts.* It is a weak Conceit ariſing upon the Miſtake of the Scriptures, to make Chriſt and *Moſes* as Oppoſites; no, *Moſes* was the Servant in the Houſe, and Chriſt the Son; and being a faithful Servant, he is not contrary to the Son, but ſubordinate to him. The very Aboliſhment of the Ceremonial Law was not as of a thing contrary, but as a thing accompliſhed in Chriſt, and ſo was an honourable Aboliſhment. And the removing of the Curſe and Rigor of the moral Law from us, was without Wrong to it, being ſatisfied in a better for us, our Surety *Jeſus Chriſt.*

They are happy that look ſo on the Law of God, as to be made ſenſible of Miſery by it, and by that made earneſt in their Deſires of Chriſt, and that judge themſelves; the more Evidence they have of Freedom from the Curſe of the Law, to be not the leſs, but ſo much the more obliged to obey the Law; that are ſtill making Progreſs and going on in that way of Obedience, though it be with continual halting, and often ſtumbling, and ſometimes falling; yet they ſhall certainly attain their Journey's End, that Perfection whereof they are ſo deſirous.

This were the Way to Lowlineſs, not to compare ourſelves with others, in which too many are often partial Judges, but with this holy Law. We uſe not to try the Evenneſs of things with our crooked Stick, but by the ſtraighteſt Rule that we can find. Thus St. *Paul, The Law is ſpiritual, I am carnal:* He looks not how much he was more ſpiritual than other Men, but how much leſs ſpiritual than the Law.

I am the Lord.] This is the trueſt and moſt conſtant Obedience, which flows jointly from Reverence and Love. Theſe two are the very Wheels upon which Obedience moves. And theſe firſt Words of the Law are moſt fit and powerful to work theſe

two

Τὸ ἴδιον. two; *Jehovah*, Sovereign Lord to be feared and reverenced; *Thy God*; and then, that hath wrought ſuch a Deliverance for thee: Therefore in both theſe reſpects moſt worthy of the higheſt Love.

This Preface cannot ſtand for a Commandment, as ſome would have it: For expreſly it commands nothing, though by Inference it enforceth all the Commandments, and is indeed ſo intended. Though it may be conceived to have a particular Ty with the firſt Commandment which follows it immediately, yet certainly it is withal a moſt fit Preface to them all, and hath a perſuaſive Influence into them all; commanding Attention and Obedience, not in the low Way of human Rhetorick, but *ſtilo imperatorio*, in a kingly Phraſe, becoming the Majeſty of *the King of Kings*, *I am Jehovah.*

Here we have three Motives to Obedience, 1. His univerſal Sovereignty, *Jehovah.* 2. His particular Relation to his own People, *Thy God.* 3. The late ſingular Mercy beſtowed on them, *That brought thee out of the Land of* Egypt. Each of them ſufficient, and therefore all together moſt ſtrongly concluding for Obedience to his Commandments.

1. *Jehovah.* Not to inſiſt on the ample Conſideration of this Name of God, of which Divines, both *Jewiſh* and *Chriſtian* have ſaid ſo much, ſome more cabbaliſtically and curiouſly, others more ſoberly and ſolidly. This they agree in, that it is the incommunicable Name of the Divine Majeſty, and ſignifies the Primitiveneſs of his Being, and his Eternity; that his Being is not derived, but is in and from himſelf; and that all other Being is from him: That he is from everlaſting to everlaſting in himſelf, without any Difference of time; but as Eternity is expreſt to our conceiving, *He who is, and who was, and who is to come*, Alpha *and* Omega.

Now

Now it is moſt reaſonable, that ſeeing all things, Mankind, and all the Creatures that ſerve for his Good, receive their Being from him, we likewiſe receive Laws from him.

2. His Majeſty is alone abſolute and independent; and all the Powers of the World, the greateſt Princes and Kings, hold their Crowns of him, are his Vaſſals, and owe Obedience to his Laws, as much as their meaneſt Subjects, that I ſay not more, in regard of the particular Obligation that their Honour and Eminency given them by him, doth lay upon them.

3. *Jehovah.* What are the numerous Stiles wherein Princes delight and glory ſo much, but a vain Noiſe of nothing in compariſon of his Name, *I am?* And in all their Grandeur, they are low petty Majeſties, when mention is made of this *Jehovah*, *Who ſtretched forth the Heavens, and laid the Foundations of the Earth, and formed the Spirit of Man within him*, Zach. xii. 1. What gives a Man, when he gives all the Obedience he can, and gives himſelf in Obedience to God? What gives he him, but what he hath firſt received from him, and therefore owes it all as ſoon as he begins to be?

This Authority of the Law-giver is the very Life of the Law; it is that we ſo readily forget, and that is the Cauſe of all Diſobedience, and therefore the Lord inculcates it often, *Levit.* xix. 36, 37. *I am the Lord*, *Ver.* 31. and again repeated, *Ver.* 37.

This is the Apoſtle St. *James*'s Argument, by which he ſtrongly proves his Concluſion, *That he that tranſgreſſeth in one, is guilty of all.* He urges not the Concatenation of Virtues in themſelves, though there is Truth and Force in that, he that hath one hath all; and ſo, he that wants any one hath none: But the Sameneſs of the Authority is his *Medium*, *For he that ſaid, Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery, ſaid*

alſo, Thou ſhalt not kill, Jam. ii. The Authority is the ſame, and equal in all. The golden Thread on which theſe Pearls are ſtringed, if it be broke in any one Part, it ſcatters them all. This Name of God ſignifying his Authority, keeps the whole Frame of the Law together, and if that be ſtirred, it falls all aſunder.

Thy God.] Neceſſity is a ſtrong but a hard Argument, if it go alone. The Sovereignty of God ties all, either to obey his Law, or undergo the Puniſhment. But Love is both ſtrong and ſweet, where there ſounds Love in the Command, and the Relation of the Commander, there it is received and chearfully obeyed by Love. Thus then, " *Thy God*, " in Covenant with thee," cannot but move thee.

We ſee then the Goſpel interwoven with the Law, *Thy God* often repeated, which is by the new Covenant, and that by a Mediator. God expects Obedience from his peculiar People, it is their Glory and Happineſs that they are his. It adds nothing to him, but much every way to them; he is pleaſed to take it as Glory done to him, to take him to be our God, and doth really exalt and honour thoſe that do ſo, with the Title and Privileges of *his People*, *Deut.* ii. 17, 18. If his own Children break his Law, he cannot but take that worſe.

Who brought thee out of the Land of Egypt.] By the Remembrance of their late great Deliverance, he mollifies their Hearts to receive the Impreſſion of this Law.

Herein was the peculiar Obligement of this People; but ours, typified by this, is not leſs, but unſpeakably greater, from the cruel Servitude of Sin, and the Prince of Darkneſs; from theſe we are delivered not to Licentiouſneſs, and Libertiniſm, but to true Liberty. *If the Son make you free, you ſhall be free indeed.* *Delivered*, Luke i. *from the Power of our Enemies.*

Enemies. To what End? *To ſerve him without Fear*, that Terror which we would be ſubject to, if we were not delivered; and to ſerve him *all the Days of our Lives:* And that *all*, if many hundred times longer than it is, yet too little for him. It is not ſuch a Servitude as that of *Egypt*, from which we are delivered, that ended to each one with his Life; but the Miſery from which we are redeemed, begins but in the Fulneſs of it when Life ends, and endures for ever.

The Goſpel ſets not Men free to Profaneneſs; no, it is a Doctrine of Holineſs, *We are not called to Uncleanneſs, but to Holineſs*, (ſaith the Apoſtle;) he hath indeed taken off the Hardneſs, the iron Yoke, and now his Commandments are not grievous, *His Yoke is eaſy, and his Burden light*; and they that are moſt ſenſible, and have moſt Aſſurance of their Deliverance, are ever the moſt active and fruitful in Obedience; they feel themſelves light and nimble, having the heavy Chains and Fetters taken off, *Pſal.* cxvi. 16. *Lord, I am thy Servant, thou haſt looſed my Bonds:* And the comfortable Perſuaſion of their Redemption, is that *Oil of Gladneſs* that ſupples and diſpoſes them to run the Way of God's Commandments.

PRECEPT I.

Thou ſhalt have no other Gods but me.

The firſt thing in Religion is to ſtate the Object of it right, and to acknowledge and receive it for ſuch. This, I confeſs, is the Intent of this firſt Precept of the *Law*, which is therefore the *Baſis* and Foundation that bears the Weight of all the reſt; and therefore (as we ſaid before) though the Preface looks to them all, yet it looks firſt to this that is neareſt it, and is knit with it, and through it to all

the reſt. The Preface aſſerted his Authority as the Strength of his Law, and this firſt Precept commands the Acknowledgment and embracing of that his Authority, and his alone as God. And this is the Spring of our Obedience to all his Commandments.

But before a particular Explication of this, a Word, 1. Of the *Diviſion* of this Law. 2. The *Stile* of it.

I. *Diviſion.* That they were divided, 1. Into two Tables. 2. Into ten Words or Commandments, none can queſtion. We have the Lawgiver's own Teſtimony clear for that; but about the particular way of dividing them into ten, and the matching of theſe two Diviſions together, there hath been and ſtill is ſome Difference; but this I will not inſiſt on. Though *Joſephus* and *Philo* the *Jew* would (to make the Number equal) have five Precepts in each Table; yet the Matter of them is more to be regarded, and perſuades the contrary, that thoſe that concern *Piety*, our Duty to God, be in the firſt Table; and thoſe together in the ſecond that concern *Equity*, or our Duty to Man; and the Summary that our *Saviour* gives of the two Tables is evidently for this. And that thoſe Precepts of *Piety*, thoſe of the firſt Table are *four*, and they of the ſecond *ſix*. And ſo that firſt and ſecond, as we have them, are different and make two, and the tenth but one, hath the Voice both of Antiquity and Reaſon, as many Divines on the *Decalogue* do uſually evince at large; which therefore were as eaſy, as it is needleſs to do over again.

The Mud of the *Romiſh* Church to the contrary, is plainly impudent Preſumption and Partiality, chuſing rather to blot out the *Law*, than reform their manifeſt Breach of it.

2. That I would ſay of the *Stile* of the Commandments, is but in this one particular, briefly: We ſee the

the greateſt part of them are *Prohibitive*, or (as we uſually call them, though ſomewhat improperly) *Negative*. *Thou ſhalt not*, &c. This, as is obſerved by *Calvin* and others, intimates our natural Bent and Inclinement to Sin, that it ſuffices not to ſhew us what ought to be done, but we are to be held and bridled by Countermands from the Practices of Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs.

Thou ſhalt not have, &c.] This Order here, and ſo in the reſt, 1. The Scope. 2. The Senſe of the Words. 3. What it forbids. 4. What it commands: And theſe follow each upon other; for out of the Scope the Senſe is beſt gathered, and from that the Breach and Obſervation.

As the ſecond Commandment concerns the ſolemn Form of divine Worſhip, that it be not ſuch as we deviſe, but as himſelf appoints. The third, the Qualification or Manner of it, not vainly and profanely, but with holy Reverence. The fourth, the ſolemn time ſet apart for it, the Sabbath. So, this firſt Precept aims at ſomewhat which is previous to all theſe.

Many diſtinguiſh this and the ſecond, *per Cultum internum & externum, by the internal and external Worſhip:* And a grave modern Divine, eſpying ſome Defect in that, doth it, *per Cultum naturalem & inſtitutum, by natural and inſtitute.* But I confeſs, both omit, at leaſt they expreſs not (it may be they take it as implied) that which is mainly intended, The Object of Worſhip; that that *Jehovah* that gave, and himſelf ſpake this *Law*, be received and acknowledged for the only true God, and ſo the only Object of divine Worſhip. And this is that which he calls, *Cultus naturalis, natural Worſhip*, that primitive Worſhip, the religious Habitude of Man to God, giving himſelf entire, outward and inward, to his Service and Obedience; for this is no other but to own him,

him, and him only for that *Deity*, to whom all Love and Worſhip and Praiſe is due.

'Tis ſure not ſo convenient to reſtrain this Precept to inward Worſhip only, for each Precept binds the whole Man to Obedience; and therefore I would not give the firſt Motions of Concupiſcence in general, for the Senſe of the tenth Commandment, as we ſhall ſhow when we come to ſpeak of that. Certainly even outward Worſhip given to a falſe God, breaks this firſt Commandment.

The Scope then is briefly, That the only true God be alone acknowledged for what he is, and (as we are able with all our Powers and Parts inwardly and outwardly) that he be anſwerably adored; that we neither change him for any other, nor join any other with him, nor be neglective and ſlack in honouring and obeying him: So that as we are particularly by each ſeveral Precept inſtructed in, and obliged to the particular Duties of it, by this we are generally tied to give Obedience to them all. 'Tis no way inconvenient, but moſt fit in this general Notion, that this firſt Commandment import the Obſervance of itſelf, and of all the reſt.

II. The Senſe of the Words, *Non habebis.* Heb. *Non erunt tibi*, &c.

1. *Erit tibi Deus*, *Thou ſhalt have a God.* Know and believe that there is a Deity. 2. Seek to know which is the true God, that thou may'ſt acknowledge him. 3. "Know me as I have revealed my-"ſelf in my Word; know and believe that I *Jeho-"vah*, the Author and Deliverer of this *Law*, that "I am God, and there is none elſe, *Iſa.* xliv. 8." 4. "Offer not therefore either to forſake me, or "to join any other with me; alienate no part of "my Due from me, for my Glory I will not give "unto another." 5. "Take me for thy God; and "give Service, and Honour, and thyſelf unto me."

Before

Before my Face.] " Set them not up in my Sight, " for I cannot ſuffer them, nor their Worſhippers; " if they come in my Sight they will provoke me to " Anger." The Word here for *Face*, ſometimes ſignifies Anger in Scripture; and it ſeems to allude to his clear Manifeſtation of himſelf to his People in the Delivery of the *Law*, and further to clear the Doctrine of pure and true Religion ſhining in the *Law*, which is, as it were, the Light of the Face of God: In which Regard, the Nations that knew him not, may be ſaid not to have their Gods before his Face; for though he ſee them, they ſaw not him. Again, *before my Face*, " If thine Idolatry be never " ſo ſecret, though it were but in Heart, remember " that it will be in my Sight; thou canſt not ſteal a- " way any of my Glory to beſtow any where elſe, " ſo cunningly and ſecretly, but I ſhall eſpy thee. " If thou canſt have any other Gods that I cannot " know of, and ſee not, thou mayeſt; but if thou " canſt have none but I ſhall ſee them, then beware, " for if I ſee it, I will puniſh it."

III. *Breaches* or *Sins* againſt this Commandment. *What it forbids.*

We cannot particularly name all, but ſome main ones.

1. That *inbred Enmity*, that habitual Rebellion that is in our Natures againſt God; συμφυὴς ἐχθρα, that *connatural Enemy* that takes Life with us as ſoon as ourſelves in the Womb. Τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *the minding of the Fleſh* *; and the Evidence of that, οὐ γὰρ ὑποτάσσεται. *It cannot be ordered*, is ever breaking Rank. Some even of thoſe that beſtow mourning upon Sin, yet do not often enough conſider the bitter Fountain, and bewail it. The wiſeſt way to know Things, is following them home to their Cauſes. Thus *David*, Pſal. li. 5. *Behold, I was ſhapen in*

* Rom. viii. 6.

in Wickedneſs, and in Sin hath my Mother conceived me.

2. *Atheiſm.* Though there is in the Conſciences of all Men an indelible Conviction of a Deity, ſo that there have been few of thoſe Monſters found profeſt *Atheiſts*; yet there is in us all naturally this of Atheiſm, that by Nature we would willingly be rid of that Light, and quench that Sparkle if we could: And all ungodly Men do live contrary to it, and fight againſt it.

3. *The groſs Idolatry of the Heathens*; their πολυθεότης, making Gods of Beaſts, almoſt of every thing, and Beaſts of themſelves, *Nullus enim terminus in falſo.* The Writers of the Primitive Church have mightily and learnedly confuted them: But we will not ſtir this Dunghill. The Scripture calls Idols ſo; *Hillulim.*

4. *Witchcraft*, Necromancy and Magical Arts, that make a God of the Devil.

5. Rome's *Invocation of Saints and Angels*; tho' they take never ſo much Pains to clear it, they do but waſh the Blot more. Thus in the ſame Matter, *Jer.* ii. 22. *Though thou take thee Nitre and much Soap, yet thine Iniquity is marked before me, ſaith the Lord.* All their Apologies take it not away, let them refine it never ſo much with Pamphlets and Diſtinctions; all they attain by ſpinning it ſo fine, is but to make it a part of the Myſtery of Iniquity.

6. *Erroneous Opinions concerning God*, and generally Hereſies in Religion.

7. *Practical or interpretative Atheiſm*, or *Idolatry*, whether of the two you will call it; for it is both in the Lives of the moſt: And the World is full of this, being ſuch as declares they have no God, or that this God is but ſome baſe Idol in his Stead; particularly amongſt ourſelves, 1. Groſs Ignorance of God, and no Endeavour to attain the Knowledge

of

of him, tho' in the midſt of the Light and Means of knowing. 2. Univerſal Profaneneſs flowing from this Ignorance, *Hoſ.* iv. 1, 2, 3. The Hearts of Men that ſhould be the Temples of God, are full of Idols; tho' we hide them in the cloſeſt Corners, they are before his Face, he ſees them, *vid. Ezek.* viii. Luſt, and Pride, and Covetouſneſs. Conſider, That which you beſtow moſt Thoughts and Service on, that which you are moſt affectionate and earneſt in, is not that your God? And is there not ſomething beſide the true God that is thus deep in the Hearts of the moſt of us? Take pains to make the Compariſon, look upon the Temper of your Minds; (to ſay nothing of much more Time ſpent upon other Things than on him:) How ardent you are in other Affairs that you think concern you near, and how cold in ſerving and honouring him? But tho' in particular Under-gods, in what ſerves their Honour, they differ, all Men naturally agree in the great Idol, *Himſelf.* Every Man is by corrupt Nature his own God. Was not this the firſt Wickedneſs that corrupted our Nature? *Ye ſhall be as Gods*; and it ſticks to it ſtill. Men would pleaſe themſelves, and have themſelves Somebody, eſteem'd and honour'd; and would have all ſerve to this End. Is not this God's Right and Due they give themſelves, to be the End of all their own Actions, and ſacrifice all to their own Glory?

IV. *What it commands.*

Now by theſe we may eaſily gather the contrary, what is the Obedience of this Commandment.

Obſervation.

Though the Graces are Duties properly belonging to this Commandment, ſome Divines think fit to expatiate into the ſeveral common Places of them, in explaining this Commandment: Yet, with all Reſpect to them, I think it not ſo fit to dwell upon each of theſe herein; their

full handling rather belonging to that Place of Divinity that treats of the Head of Sanctification, and thoſe infuſed Habits of which it conſiſts.

So to know the true God, this *Jehovah*, as to be perſuaded ſovereignly to love, and fear, and truſt in him, to ſerve and adore him.

He is to be *feared*, for he is great: *Who would not fear thee, thou King of Nations!* To be *loved*, for he is good; and becauſe both *great* and *good*, *only* fit to be *wholly* relied on and hoped in.

But Love is all, it gives up the Heart, and by that all the reſt to the Party loved; it is no more its own. Oh that we could love him! Did we ſee him, we would. It is his uncreated Beauty that holds glorified Spirits ſtill beholding and ſtill delighted; but we, becauſe we know him not, if we have any Thoughts of him, how ſhort are they? preſently down again, fall to the Earth, and into the Mire e're we are aware. Therefore,

Set yourſelves to know, and love, and worſhip this God; labour that there may be leſs of the World, and leſs of yourſelves, and more of God in your Hearts; more ſettled and fixed Thoughts of him, and Delight in him. Think not that this is only for the Learned, or only for ſome retired contemplative Spirits that have nothing elſe to do; he is the *moſt High*, and Service and Honour is due to him from all his Creatures; and from his reaſonable Creatures, reaſonable Service: And what this is, hear from the Apoſtle, and let his Exhortation, or his Intreaty, perſuade you to it, *I beſeech you therefore, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that you preſent your Bodies a living Sacrifice*, (and they are not living without the Soul) *holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reaſonable Service*, Rom. xii. 1. and your trueſt Obedience to this Commandment.

PRE-

PRECEPT II.

Thou ſhalt not make unto thee any graven Image.

The firſt Commandment binds us to acknowledge and worſhip the true God; this, to the true Worſhip of that God.

As God is not known but by his own teaching and revealing himſelf, ſo he cannot be rightly worſhipped but by his own Preſcription and Appointment.

This is the Aim of this ſecond Commandment, to bind up Man's Hands, and his working Fancy that ſets his Hands at Work, and to teach him to depend upon divine Direction for the Rule of divine Worſhip, and to offer him nothing in his Service, but what he hath received from him in command. The Prohibition is general; *Non facies tibi*, thou ſhalt not deviſe any thing to thyſelf in the Worſhip of God: And under that groſs Device of Images, and worſhipping them, expreſly named, are comprehended all other Inventions and Will-worſhip.

There is in the Words, 1. The *Precept.* 2. The *Enforcement* of it.

Precept. 1. *Thou ſhalt not make*, Thou ſhalt not imagine, nor invent, nor imitate the Invention of others. Thou ſhalt not make, nor cauſe to make: In a Word, Thou ſhalt be no way acceſſory to the corrupting of divine Worſhip, with any *Reſemblance*, or Image, or *human Deivce* at all.

The *former* a particular Word, ſignifying the then moſt uſual kind of Imagery; but the *other* of a moſt large and general Senſe, for all kind of Similitude and Repreſentation. So that the Diſpute the Church of *Rome* drives us into for her Intereſt in this Matter, about εἰδωλον and εἰκων, is not only a mere *Logomachy*, a Debate about Words, but altogether impertinent

nent and extravagant, having no Ground at all in the Words of the Commandment; the *former* whereof is more particular than either of theſe two, and the *latter* more general and comprehenſive than either they or any one Word we have to render it by.

Of the things which are in Heaven, &c.] Becauſe the vain Mind of Man had wandred up and down the World, and gone through all theſe Places to find Objects of Idolatry: In Heaven, the Sun, and Moon, and Stars; on the Earth not only Men, but Beaſts and creeping things, and Fiſhes in the Waters, and made Images of them to worſhip; the Lord is therefore particular in his Countermand.

2. The ſecond Part of the Precept is concerning their Worſhip, *Thou ſhalt not bow down to them, nor ſerve them.*

The former Word is more particular, ſpecifying one uſual Sign of Worſhip, the inclining or bowing of the Body. The other general: *Thou ſhalt not ſerve them*, i. e. give them no Kind nor Part of religious Worſhip at all, on whatſoever Pretence.

Here again the Popiſh Writers make a Noiſe with that Diſtinction, under which they think to ſhift the Cenſure of Idolatry: Call it what they will, λατρευειν, or προσκυνειν ſure it comes under the Word in the Original, which ſignifies religious Service or Worſhip. Neither can they ever find in all the Scriptures, that any thing of that Kind ſhould be beſtowed lower than upon the Majeſty of God himſelf.

This is then the Tenor of the Commandment. 1. That no Image or Repreſentation of God be made at all, as is expreſt in many other Scriptures, as giving the Senſe of this Precept. 2. Nor that any Reſemblance of any Creature be made for a religious Uſe. 3. That neither to any Creature, nor to any Reſemblance or Image be given any Part of divine Worſhip, although it were with a Pretence, yea, and

and Intention of worſhipping the true God in and by them; which if it were a ſufficient Excuſe, as the Church of *Rome* dreams it is, certainly the *Iſraelites* golden Calf, and many other the groſſeſt Idols have been in the World, might come and find room to ſhelter under it.

For I the Lord thy God am a jealous God.] This follows the other Part, the binding on, or enforcing of the Precept by Threatning and Promiſe annexed. Particularly, there be theſe *five* things, by which God deſcribes himſelf here, to perſuade Obedience to this Command, 1. His Relation to his People, *Thy God.* 2. His Power both to puniſh and reward. *El. The ſtrong God.* 3. The exact Regard he hath to his own Glory and Zeal, or Jealouſy for it. *A jealous God.* 4. The Certainty and Severity of his Juſtice, puniſhing the Tranſgreſſors of this his Law, on themſelves and their Poſterity, *Viſiting*, &c. 5. The Plenty and Riches of his Goodneſs to the Obedient, *Shewing Mercy*, &c.

This Commandment, and the fourth, are longer than the reſt, and more backed with Argument, becauſe the Light of Nature diſcerns leſs in theſe than in the reſt. The outward Manner of the Worſhip of God, and God's Exactneſs in that, to be ſerved not as we will, but as he himſelf ſees fit, and concerning the time of it.

Of the firſt Argument from God's Relation to his People before in the Preface, here it is repeated, becauſe it ſuits with the Word that follows, *Jealous.* 1. *Thy God*; Thy Husband by particular Covenant, and therefore jealous of thy Love and Fidelity to me in my Worſhip. 2. *El.* able to right myſelf upon the mightieſt and proudeſt Offender. *Do we provoke the Lord to Jealouſy*, (ſays the Apoſtle) *are we ſtronger than he?* 1 Cor. x. There joining theſe two together (as here they are) his *Strength* and his *Jealouſy.*

3. *Jealous*,

3. *Jealous*, He is the Lord and Husband of his People, and Idolatry is therefore ſpiritual Adultery; as they are often reproached with it under that Name by the Prophets, *Jer.* iii. 1. *&c.* So that by that Sin particularly his Anger is ſtirred up againſt them. The very Contract of this Marriage with his People we have, *Exod.* xix. 5. 4. *Viſiting*, As Judges and Magiſtrates uſe to viſit thoſe Places that are under their Juriſdiction, to make Enquiry after Abuſes committed in time of their Abſence, and to puniſh them, 1 *Sam.* vii. 16. Thus he that is always every where alike preſent, yet becauſe he doth not ſpeedily puniſh every Sin at the firſt, therefore when he doth execute Judgment in his appointed time, then is he ſaid to viſit, and ſearch, and find out that Iniquity, which in his time of Forbearance, he ſeemed to the Ungodly either not to ſee, or not to regard.

Of the Fathers.] It is true, the Prophet correcting the perverſe Speech of the People of his time, affirms, *That the Son ſhall not bear the Iniquity of the Father*, &c. *Ezek.* xviii. to wit, he repenting and returning, and being no way culpable of the like Iniquity, which the People then falſly preſumed of themſelves: But neither is it here ſaid, that the godly Children ſhall ſuffer for the Sin of their ungodly Parents or Anceſtors; but becauſe this Sin of Idolatry or falſe Worſhip in any kind, doth as commonly and readily deſcend to Poſterity, as any other, and there is ſcarce any Plea for falſe Religion that takes more, *It was the Religion of our Fore-fathers*; this kind of Threatning may poſſibly for that Cauſe be here particularly ſuitable.

But ſure that is not all that is here intended, that, if the Children do continue in the Sin of the Parents, they ſhall be puniſhed; but that for ſo high a Tranſgreſſion as this, he may juſtly, and often doth in Judgment give the Children over to the Sins of their Parents;

Parents; his Grace being free, and ſo not being bound to his Creature to furniſh Grace, but where he will, they go on in the Sin of their Fathers, and bring upon themſelves further Puniſhment, not only temporal, but ſpiritual and eternal. It is not neceſſary for its verifying that it be always ſo; for God, we know, hath converted many Children of ungodly, yea, particularly of idolatrous Parents, and ſhewed them Mercy: But, in that he juſtly may do thus, it is a juſt threatning; and in that he often doth thus, it is a true threatning, although in Mercy he deal otherwiſe where it pleaſeth him.

That hate me.] What! this is ſo harſh a Word, that no Body will own it. Not the moſt Diſſolute and Wicked, not the groſſeſt Idolaters. Yet generally the Love of Sin witneſſes againſt Men poſſeſt with it, that they are, Θεοστυγεῖς, Haters of God; and particularly the Love of Idols and falſe Worſhip, alienates the Soul from God, and turns it to Enmity againſt him. Men ſeem poſſibly to themſelves in falſe Worſhip humble and devout, *Col.* ii. 18. but it is to hate and diſhonour the divine Majeſty, to bring to him and force upon him, as it were, in his own Preſence, in his immediate Service, that which is moſt hateful to him.

Shewing Mercy to Thouſands.] "Bleſſing them and "their Poſterity, being their God, and the God of "their Seed."

That love and keep, &c.] "That therefore obey "me, becauſe they love me, and teſtify they love "me by obeying me." This is a general Truth in regard of all the Commandments, though more particularly to be applied to this, to which it is annexed. It forbids,

What it forbids.

1. Making any Image or Reſemblance of God at all, *Deut.* iv. 15. *Ye ſaw no manner of Similitude*, &c. *To whom will ye liken me? Iſa.* xl. *&c.*

2. The

2. The giving any kind of religious Honour and Worſhip to any Creature or created Reſemblance, *Job* xxxi. 27. *Pſal.* cxv. The Reaſon why Men are ſo propenſe to both theſe, is, becauſe they are ſo much addicted to Senſe, and their Minds are ſo blinded, that they cannot conceive of the ſpiritual Nature of God. Therefore being driven by Conſcience to ſome kind of Worſhip and Religion, they incline to have ſome viſible Object of it; the Soul having loſt its Sight, leans upon the Body, would make it up, and ſupply it by the Eye of Senſe.

And this third ſprings from the ſame Root too.

3. All Superſtition and Will-worſhip, all ſelf-pleaſing Ceremonies and Inventions in the Service of God, how pompous and plauſible and devout ſoever they ſeem to be, inſtead of decoring, they do indeed deface the native Beauty of Divine Worſhip; and, as Popiſh Pictures on Glaſs Windows, they may ſeem rich and gay, but they darken the Houſe; they keep out the Light of ſaving Truth, and obſcure the ſpiritual Part of the Service of God.

4. All groſs material Conceits and Apprehenſions of God. Other Particulars may be reduced to this Command; for this and the reſt name but the main Offences and Duties. Then it commands,

1. To learn, and carefully and punctually to obſerve the Preſcription of God in every Part of his own Worſhip, and diligently to be exerciſed in it, as in Hearing, Prayer, Sacraments, *&c.*

2. In worſhipping him to have the pureſt ſpiritual Notion of his Majeſty that we are able to attain to.

Obſ. God deals by both, by repreſenting his Juſtice and his Mercy to perſuade his People to Obedience, to drive them by Fear of the one, and draw them by the Sweetneſs of the other. Thus Paſtors are to ſet both before their People; but as

he

he delights moſt in the preſſing of his Mercy, and perſuading by that; ſo certainly 'tis that, that prevails moſt with his own Children, and doth moſt kindly melt and mould their Hearts to his Obedience.

Obſerve the Difference.

Viſit Iniquity to Thirds and Fourths, but ſhew Mercy to Thouſands that keep my Commandments.] Although it be not perfect, yet it is ſuch a keeping as flows from Love, and therefore Love makes up what is wanting in it; and that is not perfect neither in us here, and therefore Mercy makes up what is wanting in both. It is not ſuch Love and Obedience as can plead for Reward upon Merit, but ſuch as ſtands in need of Mercy, and it is free Grace and Mercy that rewards it.

Love and keep.] Theſe two are inſeparable. No keeping the Commandments without Love, no Love without keeping them. Try then the one by the other, the Sincerity of your Obedience by examining the Spring of it, if it ariſe from Love; and try the Reality of your Love, if it be active and fruitful in Obedience.

You know how ſtudious Love is to pleaſe, how obſervant of their Will whom it affects, preferring it to their own Will, and deſirous to have no Will but the ſame; makes hard things eaſy, and cannot endure to have any thing called difficult to it: Much Love to God would do this, it would turn all Duty into Delight. Did we once know what this were, we would ſay with St. *Auſtin*, *What needs Threatening and Puniſhment to thoſe that love thee not, is it not Puniſhment enough not to love thee?* If you would have all your Obedience ſweet and eaſy to yourſelves, and acceptable to God, ſeek above all things Hearts inflamed with his Love.

PRECEPT III.

Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain, &c.

The Pſalmiſt ſtirring up himſelf to the Praiſes of God, *Pſal.* lvii. 8. calls up his Glory to it, *Awake my Glory.* By *Glory* the *Hebrew* Interpreters underſtand the *Soul*; the *Septuagint* and others the *Tongue*: So the Apoſtle, following the *Septuagint*, renders it, from *Pſal.* xv. *Acts* ii.

It ſuits well with both: The Soul being the better Part of Man, far excelling the Body; and amongſt the Parts of the Body the Tongue having this Excellency, to be the Organ of Speech, and ſo the Interpreter of the Mind: And this Difference from the Beaſts, as the Soul is, may well partake of its honourable Name, and be called *Man's Glory.*

But that which gives them both beſt Title to that Name, is that Exerciſe to which he calls them, the praiſing and glorifying of their Lord and Maker. Then are they indeed our *Glory*, when they are ſo taken up and employed, when the one conceives, and the other utters his Glory.

And as it becomes them always to be one, as they have one Name, the Soul and the Tongue to agree, ſo eſpecially ſhould this one Name given them be anſwered by their Harmony and Agreement in his own Work, for which chiefly they have that Name, in giving Glory to God; and it is that which this Commandment requires: Forbidding that which is the Ignominy of Man, both of his Soul and of his Tongue, and degrades them, turns them out of the Name of *Glory*, to be called *Shame* and *Diſhonour*, that is, Irreverence, and diſhonouring the glorious Name of GOD: And therefore, on the contrary, com-

commanding the reverent and holy Uſe of his Name and Service; and that we always endeavour ſo to ſpeak and think of him, and ſo to walk before him, as thoſe that ſeek beyond all things that his Name may be glorified in us and by us. For though falſe Swearing and vain Swearing are main Breaches of this Commandment, (as we ſhall ſhew afterwards) being primely forbidden by it, yet it extends generally to all our Speeches concerning God: Neither is it to be reſtrained there, and kept within that Compaſs, as if it gave only Law to the Tongue; although indeed the Tongue hath a very great Share in it, both in the breaking and keeping of it, yet certainly the Precept in its full Senſe goes deeper into the Soul, and gives a Rule to the Speech of the Mind, our Thoughts concerning God; and larger, ſtretches itſelf forth to our Actions and Life, that hath as loud a Voice to thoſe with whom we converſe as our Tongues, and is the more conſiderable of the two, giving a truer Character of Men, what they are indeed, than their Words can do.

The firſt Commandment teaches and enjoins whom we ſhall worſhip. The ſecond, what Worſhip we ſhall give him. This third ſhews us with what Diſpoſition and Intention, and anſwerably with what manner of Expreſſion we ſhall worſhip him, and uſe his Name, that it be not vainly, and after a common trivial Manner, but in Holineſs and Humility, and Deſire of his Glory.

So then this Commandment concerns particularly that which is the great End of all the Works of God, *The Glory of his Name.* He made all Things for himſelf, *Prov.* xvi. his Works of Creation for this End, *Iſa.* xliii. 7. of Redemption and new Creation of the elect World, *Eph.* i. *All to his Praiſe and Glory:* And for this End calls he us from Darkneſs to Light, to ſhew forth his Praiſes or Virtues, 1 *Pet.*

ii. 9. This we are to intend with him, and that this Precept requires of us, that what he aim'd at in all his Works, the ſame we may intend in all ours: And this is an excellent thing, the holieſt and happieſt Condition, to make God's Purpoſe ours, and have the ſame End with him. Here it is particularly true, *Summa religionis eſt imitari quem colis*, *The Main of Religion is to imitate him whom we worſhip.* Thus are we to live, and particularly ſo to worſhip him and make Mention of his Name; that we be ever ſenſible of its Worth and Greatneſs, and ſo beware that we indignify it not, but always ſeek to advance the Honour and Glory of it; and that is the very Scope of this Commandment.

There is in it, 1. The *Precept* itſelf. 2. *The annexed Commination.*

The Meaning of the Words. In the *Precept*, 1. What his Name. 2. To take it. 3. What in vain.

The Name.] 1. The Names that are given him in Scripture, *Jehovah*, *Elohim*, &c. It was a fooliſh and profane Shift of the *Jews*, that thought themſelves free, if they abuſed not the Name *Jehovah:* And ſo they became ſuperſtitious in the forbearing that, and licentious in the Abuſe of the reſt; and ſwearing by other things in Heaven and Earth, &c. Which therefore our Saviour reproves, giving the true Senſe of this Commandment, *Matth.* v. And this is the Nature of Superſtition, to make frivolous undue Reſtraints, by way of Compenſation of that profane Liberty and Looſeneſs in the Commandments of God, which is its uſual Companion. 2. All the Attributes of God, by which the holy Scriptures ſet him forth to us. 3. Generally any thing whatſoever by which God is made known unto us, and diſtinguiſhed from all others, and by which we make mention of him, which are the Uſes of a Name. In

a Word, that of St. *Paul* expreſſeth it fully and fitly, Τὸ γνωσὸν τῶ Θεῶ

Thou ſhalt not take,] that is, Thou ſhalt not take, or lift up, or bear. 1. Not uſe it ſecretly by thyſelf, or within thyſelf, in thine own Thoughts, without Reverence; not take it in vain. So, 2. Not make mention of it, or expreſs it to others vainly; not lift it up in vain. 3. Not bear, not be called by it, or have it called upon thee; not profeſs it in vain.

In vain.] 1. Falſely and diſſimulately. 2. Profanely. 3. Unprofitably, to no purpoſe. 4. Lightly and inconſiderately, without due Regard, and holy Fear.

2. The *annexed Commination.*

He will not hold him guiltleſs.] "He will not clear "him. The ſovereign Judge, from whoſe Hand no "Offender can eſcape, except he willingly ſet him "free and abſolve him, he will not abſolve them "that abuſe his Name." And it means further, he will not clear him, that is, he will certainly puniſh him, and do Judgment on him as guilty. And this is the rather particularly here expreſt, becauſe Men are ſubject fooliſhly to promiſe themſelves Impunity in this Sin, think either there remains no Guiltineſs behind it, but it paſſes as the Words do; or if there be any, yet being but a Mutter of Words, wherein the moſt uſual and known Breach of this Command conſiſts, that the Guiltineſs of them is ſo ſmall, that any little Excuſe may wipe it off; that it is but Inadvertence, or a bad Cuſtom, or ſome ſuch thing. "No, (ſays the Lord, the Law-giver himſelf) de-"lude not yourſelves, think not the Honour and "Diſhonour of my Name a light Matter; or if you "will, yet I will not think it ſo, nor you ſhall not "find it ſo; though you eaſily forgive and clear "yourſelves, I will not clear you, but will vindi-

"cate

" cate the Glory of my Name in your juſt Puniſh-
" ment, which your Sin of taking it in vain did a-
" buſe and diſhonour; and you ſhall feel in that
" Puniſhment that you are not guiltleſs, as you ima-
" gin'd." The Name of GOD is great and weighty and honourable, (as the ſame *Hebrew* Word ſignifies both) and therefore, *qui aſſumunt vel attollunt*, as the Word here is, they that offer to lift up this weighty Name lightly and regardleſly, it ſhall fall upon them, and they ſhall be cruſh'd under the Weight of it.

There are many Queſtions relating to this Commandment handled and diſcuſſed by Divines, as of an Oath, a Vow, *&c.* which, for our purpoſed Brevity, we will paſs by; and only, according to our uſual Method, add ſome chief Heads of the Violation and Obſervance of this Commandment.

It forbids, 1. All falſe Swearing or Perjury, which is to take his Name after the groſſeſt Manner, in vain, or *in mendacium*, as the Word likewiſe ſignifies; to call Truth itſelf, the firſt Verity, to partake of a Lie. But he is not mocked, for as the Nature of an Oath imports invocating him as the higheſt both Witneſs and Judge of Truth, and Puniſher of Falſhood, he always in his own due time makes it good on thoſe that dare adventure upon that Guiltineſs in ſo high a kind.

2. *Papal* Diſpenſation of Oaths, which is a moſt hainous Sin, and becomes him that is eminently called *the Man of Sin*. It is more than Perjury, for it is a profeſt avowed Patrociny of Perjury, together with an impudent Conceit of a Privilege and Right to do ſo.

3. Equivocatory Oaths, by which, if it were lawful, the groſſeſt Perjury might be defended; for there is nothing ſo falſe, but ſome mental Reſervation may make it true.

4. Abuſing the Name and Word of God to Charms and Spells.

5. Execration and Curſing by the Name of Satan, which is no other but invocating him.

6. Swearing by any Creature.

7. Abuſing and vilifying the glorious and holy Name of God, by paſſionate, or by vain and common cuſtomary Swearing.

8. Swearing for Ends of Controverſy, and in weighty Matters, where an Oath is lawful, yea neceſſary, yet doing it without due Reverence, and Conſideration of the Greatneſs of God, and the Nature of an Oath.

9. Abuſing of the Word of God, either wreſting it to defence of Error, or making Sport and Jeſting with it.

10. Scoffing and Taunting at Holineſs, and the Exerciſes of Religion.

11. Diſhonouring the Religion which we profeſs, by unworthy and unſuitable Carriage of Life.

12. Performing Prayer, or any other religious Exerciſe, only out of Cuſtom, without Affection and Delight, and holy Regard of the Preſence and Majeſty of God in his Worſhip. More might be added, which for Brevity we omit.

Inference.

Is it not the higheſt Shame of Chriſtians to take Pleaſure to vilify and abuſe that holy Name of God, that Saints and Angels are bleſſing above, and which we hope (as we pretend) to bleſs with them for ever? If any dare offer to excuſe it, by Provocation or Paſſion, that otherwiſe uſe it not; conſider what a Madneſs this is, becauſe Man hath injured thee, thou wilt injure God, and be avenged upon his Name for it. And you that plead Cuſtom, accuſe yourſelves more deeply; that tells you are guilty of long Continuance in, and frequent Commiſſion of this horrible Sin. Were the

Fear

Fear of God in Mens Hearts, it would prevail both above their Paſſion and their Cuſtom. Did they believe this, that the Lord will not clear in his great Day, it would fright them out of their Cuſtom. Were there a Law made, that whoſoever were heard ſwear ſhould be put to Death, you would find a Way to break your Cuſtom: God threatens eternal Death, and you fear not, becauſe indeed you believe not.

It commands, Generally, the reverent and holy Uſe of the Name of God: And particularly, 1. In caſe of Neceſſity, by adviſed and religious Swearing by his Name, and his alone, in Judgment, Truth and Righteouſneſs. 2. Conſider his Name often, to take it into our Thoughts, to meditate on his glorious Attributes, and on his Word and Works; in both which thoſe Attributes ſhine forth unto us. 3. To delight to make mention of his Name upon all fit Occaſions, and to ſpeak to his Glory. 4. To adorn our holy Profeſſion of Religion with a holy Life, with wiſe and circumſpect walking, that it may not be evil ſpoken of by our Means. 5. That our Heart and Affection be in the Service of God which we perform, otherwiſe (how plauſible ſoever the Appearance and Outſide of it is) it is nothing but Guiltineſs within, a taking of his Name in vain, who will not hold them guiltleſs that do ſo. 6. Above all Exerciſes, to delight in the Praiſes of God, which is moſt properly the exalting and magnifying of his Name, the lifting it up on high. The *Pſalmiſt* abounds in commending it; it is *good*, it is *comely*, it is *pleaſant*: Oh! that we could reſolve with him, *Pſal.* xxxiv. 1, 2. *I will bleſs the Lord at all times; his Praiſe ſhall be in my Mouth continually: My Soul ſhall make her boaſt in the Lord*, &c. This is, as we can, to bear a Part here with glorified Spirits; and

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a certain Privilege to us, that after a few Days we ſhall be admitted into their Number.

PRECEPT IV.

Remember to keep holy the Sabbath-day, &c.

Amongſt all the viſible Creatures, it is Man's peculiar Excellency, that he is capable of conſidering and worſhipping his Maker, and was made for that Purpoſe; yet being compoſed of the Duſt of the Earth, and the Breath of God, a Body and a Soul, the Neceſſities of that meaner Part, while we are in this Life, employ as much, and take up a great Part of our little time. And in this Regard God hath wiſely and graciouſly ſet apart a Day for us, one of each ſeven to be appropriate to that our higheſt Employment, the contemplating and ſolemn worſhipping of his Majeſty. This the Scope of this Precept,

Πνῦς χ) χῶς. Naz.

1. The Precept itſelf. 2. The Reaſon of it, and Motive to its Obedience. The Precept itſelf is firſt briefly expreſt. 2. Further explained and urged. *Diviſion.*

Remember.] This Word uſed, 1. It ſeems to reflect upon by-paſt Omiſſion and Forgetfulneſs, for though it was inſtituted in Paradiſe, and was not now a new unheard of thing to this People, as appears by *Exod.* xvi. 23. yet it is like they were much worn out of the Obſervation and Practice of it, eſpecially during the time of their Captivity in *Egypt*. So then it is renewed thus, "Keep holy this Day which you know was ſo long "ago appointed to be ſo, be not now any more un-"mindful and regardleſs of it." 2. Such a Way of enjoining ſeems more particularly needful in this than in the reſt, becauſe it is not ſo written in Nature as *The Words.*

the reſt, but depends wholly upon particular Inſtitution, which may alſo be the Cauſe why it is ſo large, and the Form of it alone amongſt all the ten, both negative and poſitive, *Thou ſhalt do no Work*, and, *remember to keep it holy*. 3. But the main Reaſon of this, *Remember*, is, the main Thing or Aim in this Precept, as both the Badge, and the Preſerver and Increaſer of all Piety and Religion. And therefore is it, that it is ſo often preſt in the Books of the Law, and Sermons of the Prophets to the People of God, and ſo often called a Sign of God's Covenant with them, and their Mark of Diſtinction from all other People *.

The Sabbath-day.] It is called a Day of Reſt, from the Beginning and Original of its Inſtitution, God's Reſt; and from the End of its Inſtitution, Man's Reſt; both which follow in the Words of the Command: The one is the Example and enforcing Reaſon of the other.

That thou keep holy.] God ſanctified it by inſtituting it, and Man ſanctified it by obſerving it according to that Inſtitution.

This ſanctifying is, 1. In Ceſſation from earthly Labour. 2. In their Stead to be wholly poſſeſt and taken up with ſpiritual Exerciſe, both in private and in publick. The former is neceſſary for the being of the latter, that Ceſſation for this Work; and the latter is neceſſary for the due being of the former; we cannot be vacant and entire for ſpiritual Service, unleſs we ceaſe from bodily Labour, and this Ceſſation or Reſting from bodily Labour, cannot be a ſanctifying of this Day unto God, unleſs it be accompanied with ſpiritual Exerciſe.

In the following Words, that Part is only expreſt, the Reſt or Abſtinency from Work; but the other is

* *Exod.* xxiii. 12 and xxxi. 13, 14. *Levit.* xix. 30. 25. 2, &c. *Jerem.* xvii. *Iſai.* lviii. 13, 14, &c.

is ſuppoſed as the End of this, that they ſhall not do their own Works, that they may attend upon God's, his ſolemn Worſhip. And that is implied in that Word, *It is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God*, both of his own appointing, and for this end this Work, that he may be more ſolemnly worſhipped. And likewiſe the *Antitheſis* that ſeems to be in that Word, *In ſix Days thou ſhalt do all thy Work*, imports, that on the ſeventh thou ſhalt do God's: Not ſo called, that any Benefit ariſes to him by our Service; no, *Our Goodneſs reaches him not at all.* That Way, that Worſhip that is far above ours, that of the Angels, can add nothing to him, for he is infinite. Even this Work, Sabbath's Work, and all our Prayers and Praiſes offered to him, and all Performances of his Worſhip, they are our Works in reſpect of the Gain and Advantage of them, it comes all back to us. But his Worſhip is his Work objectively, he is the Object of it, and directively by particular Preſcription from himſelf; and, if you will add effectively too, never done aright but by his own Grace and Aſſiſtance.

Six Days ſhalt thou labour, &c.] The Command of due Labour and Diligence in our particular Callings, is not of this Place, it belongs properly to the eighth Precept, and ſome way to the ſeventh; here it is only mentioned premiſſively, and for Illuſtration of this Duty here enjoined. And further, there is under it a Motive from abundant Equity, ſeeing God hath made the Proportion thus, not pinched to us, but dealt very liberally in the time granted for our own Work; what groſs, not Impiety only, but Iniquity and Ingratitude will it be, to encroach upon that ſmall Part he hath nominated and ſet apart for his Service? This was a great Aggravation of our firſt Parents firſt Sin, that having the free Uſe of all the Trees in the Garden beſides, they would not

bate that one that was forbidden them, in Homage and Obedience to him that had given them all the reſt, and given them themſelves, who a little before were nothing.

Thou ſhalt labour.] Not ſo as in them to forget and take no Notice of God, not at all to call upon him and worſhip him, and think to acquit all by ſome kind of Attendance on him on the Sabbath. They that do ſo are moſt unſanctified themſelves, and therefore cannot ſanctify the Sabbath to God. Such profane Perſons do profane and pollute all they touch with their foul Hands, for ſuch be all profane Hands lift up to God in Prayer. The Life of the Godly is not a viſiting of God only in his Houſe on this Day, but a daily and conſtant walking with God in our own Houſes, and in all our Ways, making both our Houſes and our Hearts, his Houſes, his Temples, where he may dwell with us, and we may offer him our daily Sacrifices.

Only the peculiar of this Day is, that we may not divide it betwixt Heaven and Earth, but it ſhall be wholly for the Service of God, and no Work at all to have Place in it that may hinder that, and ſuits not with the ſanctifying of it; for ſo we are to underſtand the Word, *No manner of Work.*

Neither thou nor thy Servant, &c.] As each one is obliged perſonally, ſo they that have Command of others, are bound to bind them to Obſervance, and the Cattle to Reſt, becauſe their Labour is for Man's Uſe, and therefore his reſting infers theirs; as likewiſe their Reſt is for a paſſive Conformity, that Man may ſee nothing round about him, but what may incite to the Obſervance of this Day; which was the Reaſon, in ſolemn Faſts, of the Beaſts faſting likewiſe, for Man's further Humiliation. The *Stranger*, if converted and profeſſing their Religion, the ſame Reaſon for him, as for all others within a Man's Houſe;

Houſe; and if a Stranger to their Religion too, yet they might and ought, as here is commanded, oblige him to this Part of outward Conformity, Ceſſation from Work, which otherwiſe would be an offenſive and ſcandalous Sight; and withal if they did any Work for thoſe with whom they dwell, their Share would be deeper in the Sin, than of ſuch a Stranger, not profeſſing their Religion.

For in ſix Days.] It is not pertinent here to ſpeak of the Reaſon of this, why God made ſix Days Work of that, which he could have done in one Inſtant; here it is only urged exemplarily, as the Reaſon why God did ſanctify this Day, and why we ſhould ſanctify it. His Reſt you know is not of Wearineſs, or at all of ceaſing from Motion; *For he faints not, neither is wearied*, as he tells us by the Prophet; yea, he moves not at all in working, *Omnia movet ipſe immotus.* But this Reſt is this, that this was the Day that immediately followed the perfecting of the Creation; and therefore God bleſt it with this Privilege, (that is the Bleſſing of it) that it ſhould be to Men holy, for the Contemplation of God and of his Works, and for ſolemn Worſhip to be performed to him.

All the other Precepts of this Law remaining in full Force in their proper Senſe, it cannot but be an Injury done to this Command, either flatly to refuſe it that Privilege; or, which is little better, to evaporate it into Allegories. Nor was the Day aboliſhed as a typical Ceremony, but that ſeventh only changed to a ſeventh ſtill, and the very next to it: He that is Lord of the Sabbath, either himſelf immediately, or by his Authority in his Apoſtles, appointing that Day of his Reſurrection for our Sabbath, adding to the Remembrance of the firſt Creation, the Memorial of accompliſhing the new Creation, the Work of our Redemption, which appeared then manifeſtly

niſeſtly to be perfected, when our Redeemer broke the Chains of Death, and aroſe from the Grave, he that is the Light of the new World, ſhining forth a-new the ſame Day that Light was made in the former Creation. This Day was St. *John* in the Spirit taken up with thoſe extraordinary Revelations, *Apoc.* i. 10. They were extraordinary indeed; and certainly every Chriſtian ought to be in the Spirit in holy Meditations and Exerciſes on this Day more than the reſt, winding up his Soul, that the Body poiſes downwards, to a higher Degree of Heavenlineſs, to be particularly careful to bring a humble Heart to ſpeak to God in Prayer, and hear him in his Word; a Heart breathing after him, longing to meet with himſelf in his Ordinances. And certainly it is ſafer and ſweeter to be thus affected towards the Lord's Day, than to be much buſied about the Debate of the Change.

The very Life of Religion doth much depend upon the ſolemn Obſervation of this Day: Conſider but, if we ſhould intermit the keeping of it for one Year, to what a Height Profaneneſs would riſe in thoſe that fear not God, which yet are reſtrained (though not converted) by the preaching of the Word, and their outward partaking of publick Worſhip; yea, thoſe that are moſt ſpiritual, would find themſelves Loſers by the Intermiſſion.

What forbidden. 1. Bodily Labour on this Day, where Neceſſity unavoidable, or Piety commands not. 2. Sporting and Paſtimes *. This is not to make it a Sabbath to God, but to our Luſts, and to Satan; and hath a ſtronger Antipathy with the Worſhip of God, and that Temper of Mind they intend in it, than the hardeſt Labour. 3. Reſting from theſe, but withal, reſting from the proper Work

* *Sabb. vituli aurei.*

Work of this Day, neglecting the Worſhip of God in the Aſſemblies of his People; the Beaſts can keep it thus, as we ſee in the Precept. 4. Reſorting to the publick Worſhip of God, but in a cuſtomary cold way, without Affection and ſpiritual Delight in it. 5. Spending the Remainder of the Day incongruouſly, in vain Viſits and Diſcourſes, *&c.*

How obſerved.

1. By pious Remembrance of it, and Preparation, ſequeſtring not only the Body from the Labour, but our Souls from the Cares and other vain Thoughts of the World. 2. Attending upon the publick Worſhip of God willingly and heartily, as the Joy and Refreſhment of our Souls, *Iſa.* lviii. *Pſal.* cxxii. 3. Spending the Remainder of it in private holily, as much as may be, in Meditation of the Word preached, and Conference, in Prayer, reading, and meditating on the great Works of God, of Creation, Redemption, *&c.*

Inference.

This is the loveliеſt brighteſt Day in all the Week to a ſpiritual Mind; theſe Reſts refreſh the Soul in God, that finds nothing but Turmoil in the Creature. Should not this Day be welcome to the Soul, that ſets it free to mind its own Buſineſs, which is on other Days to attend the Buſineſs of its Servant, the Body? And theſe are a certain Pledge to it of that expected Freedom, when it ſhall enter to an eternal Sabbath and Reſt in him for ever, who is the only Reſt of the Soul.

PRECEPT V.

Honour thy Father and thy Mother, that thy Days may be long in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

The renewed Image of God in Man, or the new Man, is made up of Holineſs and Righteouſneſs,

Eph.

Eph. iv. 24. Theſe two are that of which the whole Law of God is the Rule: The firſt Table, the Rule of Holineſs or Piety towards God: The ſecond, of Righteouſneſs or Equity towards Men. And of the Commandments that concern this, the firſt aims at the preſerving of that Order which God hath appointed in the ſeveral Relations of Superiors and Inferiors; that is the Scope of this fifth Commandment.

Daily Experience teacheth us how needful this is, that God give a particular Precept concerning this; in that we ſee how few there are that know aright, either how to command and bear Rule as Superiors, or as Inferiors to obey and be ſubject: And there is one Evil very natural to Men that miſleads them in both, Pride and Self-opinion, which often makes Superiors affect Exceſs in commanding, and Inferiors defective in due Obedience.

Order. It hath the firſt Place in the ſecond Table. 1. As being the Rule of Order and Society amongſt Men, which is needful for the better obſerving of all the reſt; and in all Authority there is a particular Reſemblance of God, and therefore fitly placed next to thoſe Precepts that contain our Duty to himſelf. He is pleaſed to uſe that Interchange of Names with Superiors that teſtifies this Reſemblance, not only to take theirs to himſelf, to be called a *Father*, a *Maſter*, or *King*, &c. but to communicate his own Name to them, and call them *Gods*. And where the Apoſtle ſpeaks of God as the *Father of Spirits*, he draws a Reaſon from that Obedience we owe to the Fathers of our Fleſh, as the ſubordinate Cauſes of our Being *.

Diviſion. 1. The *Precept*. 2. The *Promiſe*. And it is called by the Apoſtle, *the firſt Commandment with Promiſe*. For the laſt Clauſe of the ſecond Commandment, though it imply a Promiſe, yet

* Πρῶτα Θεὸν τίμα μετεπειτα δὲ σεῖο γονῆας. Phocill.

yet (as is uſually obſerved) it is general to the keeping of all the Commandments; whereas this is appropriate. But again, it is a Promiſe of a Mercy in general, this of one particular Bleſſing. 3. 'Tis not formally a Promiſe, though it implies one indeed, and is intended ſo; but it is ſet down by way of Deſcription of God, from his Mercy and Bounty to thoſe that keep his Precepts; as the Clauſe foregoing it, expreſſes his Juſtice in puniſhing the rebellious.

The Meaning of the Words.

Honour.] Under this is comprehended whatſoever is due to Superiors, by virtue of that their Station and Relation to us; inward reſpective Thoughts and Eſteem of them, and outward Expreſſion, and ſignifying of it by the uſual Signs of Honour, and by Obedience and Gratitude, *&c.*

Thy Father, &c.] This Relation is named for all the reſt, as being the firſt and moſt natural. 2. The ſweeteſt and moſt affectionate Superiority; and therefore the fitteſt to regulate the Command of Superiors, and to perſuade Inferiors to Obedience. Magiſtrates are Fathers for Mens civil Good in their Societies, and dwelling together; Miniſters, Fathers for their ſpiritual Good and Society as Chriſtians.

That thy Days may be long, &c.] That it is ſaid, *which the Lord thy God ſhall give thee*, is peculiar to that People to whom this Law was firſt delivered; but the Subſtance of the Promiſe being common, extends to all with the Precept.

This Bleſſing of Length of Days, is particularly fit for the Duty; that they who honour their Parents, who are the ſecond Cauſes of their Life, ſhall be bleſs'd with long Life.

This, as all other Promiſes of temporal Things, is ever to be taken with that Condition, without which they might change their Quality, and prove rather Puniſhments; but God always beſtows them on his

own, and therefore ought to be underſtood ſo to promiſe them, in ſo far as they are fit for them, and may be truly good in their particular Enjoyment, and as they conduce to a greater Good.

It forbids, 1. All Diſobedience in Inferiors to the juſt Commands of thoſe that God hath placed in Authority above them: Stubbornneſs and Rebellion in Children againſt their Parents, or Deſpiſing and Diſeſteem of them for their Meanneſs in Body, or Mind, or Eſtate. The Precept is not, "Honour thy Parents for their Riches, or Wiſdom, "or Comelineſs;" but, "Honour them as thy Pa-"rents, and becauſe they are ſo." Againſt this Command is all other Diſobedience, or Refractorineſs of thoſe that owe Obedience; Wives to their Husbands, Servants to their Maſters, People to their Paſtors, *&c.*

2. Superiors break it, when they abuſe their Authority to ſerve their Pride; their ſcrewing it too high is very unpleaſant, a particular Diſhonour to God, and defaces the Reſemblance they have of him; ſpoils their Harmony, as a String too high wound up: And beſides that, it is very dangerous, being the ready Way to break it. As in Magiſtracy and publick Government, Tyranny is moſt obſervable, there is petty Tyranny in Maſters and Parents, *&c.* in extream Harſhneſs and Bitterneſs, *&c.* μὴ παροξύνετε ſays the Apoſtle, *&c.* Again, when Superiors walk unworthily, and ſo diveſt themſelves of that Honour which belongs to them.

It commands, Firſt, That Children give due Reſpect and Obedience to their Parents; and all that are ſubject to the Authority of others, though they have not ſuitable Deſerving, give it to their Station, in Obedience to God who commands; for though they, perſonally conſidered, do not, yet certainly God deſerves our Obedience. And it is ſo much

much the purer to him, when other Incitements failing, yet we obſerve that which fails not at all. All Obedience to Men is limited thus, that it be in the Lord, and with regard to his Supremacy; and therefore no Authority can oblige to the Obedience of any Command that croſſes his. Authority is primitively and originally in God, and he gives not his Glory to another; he gives not away any of his peculiar Authority to Man, but ſubſtitutes him: And our firſt Tye is to God, as his Creatures, and this is univerſal; the greateſt Kings are his Vaſſals, and owe him Homage, and no Authority derived from him can free us from that which we owe to himſelf. There is a ſtraight Line of Subordination, and if Superiors leave this, we are to adhere to it, looking directly to God, keeping our Station. Some of the Schoolmen think that the inferior Angels therefore fell with the Chief in the Apoſtacy, becauſe they look'd ſo much upon him, that they conſidered him not in Subordination to God, and ſo left their Station, as the Apoſtle ſpeaks.

Secondly, The Duty of all Superiors is, 1. To conſider that their higher Station is not for themſelves, and for their own Advantage, but for thoſe that are in Subjection to them; as the Stars are ſet in the higheſt Place, but are for the Benefit of the inferior World, by their Light, and Heat, and Influence. *Let them be for Lights in the Firmament of Heaven, to give Light upon the Earth*, Gen. i. 15. 2. Let them always remember to command in God, and for him; to prefer his Honour to their own, ſeeing he gives Command concerning theirs, that they make it ſerviceable for the advancing of his; for to this Purpoſe hath he given them Authority, and given Command that they be honoured: And his Promiſe is to *honour thoſe that honour him, but they that deſpiſe him ſhall be deſpiſed.* This many Superiors have felt, be-

cauſe they would not believe it, and take notice of it.

Would Parents teach their Children to know God, and honour and obey him, this were the ſureſt and moſt effectual Way to make them obedient Children to them: If they teach them to obey God, you ſee he commands them to obey their Parents; and therefore in Obedience to him they will do ſo.

PRECEPT VI.

Thou ſhalt not kill: Or, *Thou ſhalt do no Murder.*

The World was at firſt perfect Harmony, but Sin made the Breach at which Diſcord entred, Enmity betwixt God and Man, and Enmity betwixt Man and Man. As the Sin that hath poiſoned Man's Nature, makes him a Rebel to God, ſo it makes them Tygers and Wolves one to another: And that ſame Serpent that at firſt envenom'd our Nature, doth ſtill hiſs on wretched Man, both to Diſobedience againſt God, and Enmity and Cruelty againſt one another. We ſee, how ſoon this Evil followed upon the former; the firſt Parents diſobeyed God, and the firſt Children, the one killed the other. In Oppoſition to this Evil; God hath given this to be one of his ten Precepts, *Thou ſhalt not kill.*

Prec. 5. Having given a Rule touching the particular Relations of Men; the following Commandments of the ſecond Table concern the general Duties of all Men one to another; and this ſixth regardeth his Being or Life.

Not kill.] This ties not up the Sword of Juſtice, which is in the Magiſtrate's Hand, from puniſhing Offenders, even with Death thoſe that deſerve it; but rather calls for the Uſe of it, *not being to be carried in vain*, as the Apoſtle ſays; not a gilt Sword only for Shew, but to be drawn and weilded for the Exe-

Execution of Juſtice; both that, in the juſt Puniſhment of Sin, Κόλασις, the Sinner may eat of the Fruit of his own Ways, and ſo God the ſupream Judge and Fountain of Juſtice may be honoured, Τιμωρια, and that by that Example, Παραδειγμα, others may be terrified from the like Offences. And thus, juſt Killing by the Sword of the Magiſtrate, is a main Means of the obſerving this Commandment amongſt Men, *Thou ſhalt not kill.*

By the like Reaſon is juſt War likewiſe freed from the Breach of this Commandment. But,

The Scope of the Precept being the Preſervation and Safety of the Life of Man, and guarding it from Violence, it is evident that all Injury to our Neighbour's Life, our own not excluded, is *forbidden.* And not only the hainous Fault of Murther, which human Laws do puniſh, but all the Seeds and Beginnings of this Sin in the Heart, to which principally, as the Fountain of our Actions, the ſpiritual Law of God is given, as the authentick Interpretation of our Saviour teacheth, *Matth.* v. and particularly touching this Commandment, *Ver.* 21, *&c.*

1. All fixed Hatred of our Brethren is forbidden, as the higheſt Degree of Heart-murther. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart*, Levit. xix. And 1 John iii. 15. *Whoſoever hateth his Brother is a Murtherer*; and he adds, that *ye know that no Murtherer hath Life eternal abiding in him.* So then, he is in a woful deadly Condition in whoſe Heart this Hatred dwells.

This is an infernal Kind of Fire, like your Fires under Ground, that cannot be quenched; ſo far is it from the Temper of any truly ſpiritual and heavenly Mind to be ſubject to it. There is not any thing more contrary to the Spirit of God, and the Work of his Grace, than the Spirit of Malice, although it never break forth to Revenge; yet

yet if the Heart rejoice when Evil befals thoſe it diſlikes, although it come from another Hand, yet God accounts it, as if he, that is glad at it, had inflicted it, and been the Worker of it. Therefore *Job* proteſts thus, *That he rejoiced not at the Deſtruction of him that hated him, nor lift up his Soul when Evil found him*, Job xli. 29.

2. Raſh Anger, either that which is altogether without juſt Cauſe, or upon ſome juſt Cauſe ariſes to an undue Meaſure. And is not this the ordinary Diſeaſe of the greateſt Part, an habitual Bitterneſs of Spirit, that is put out of its Seat, and troubled with every trifling Cauſe, peeviſhly ſtirred up with the Shadow and Imagination of a Wrong, where none is done?

3. The Vent of theſe Paſſions of Envy and Hatred, or ſudden raſh Anger, by Railings and Striſe and bitter ſpeaking, by Scoffs and Taunts, by Whiſperings and Detraction, which are the common Exerciſe of baſe and unworthy Spirits.

This Commandment *requires*, that to the avoiding and Forbearance of all Injury to the Life of our Neighbour, we add a charitable Diſpoſition and Deſire of preſerving it, and do accordingly act that Charity to our utmoſt Power to the Good and Comfort of his Life; uſing towards him Meekneſs and Patience, Clemency and Beneficence, doing him good, ſupplying his Wants, as we are able: For it is Cruelty to the Life of our poor Brethren, to be ſtraight-handed towards them in the Day of their Neceſſity and our Abundance, at leaſt of our comparatively better Eſtate, 1 *John* iii.

But we think we do much this Way, when upon right Trial we would find ourſelves exceeding defective; we look upon our few and petty Acts of Charity with a multiplying Glaſs, and ſee one as it were ten. Who almoſt are there, that will draw ſomewhat

what from their Exceſſes, to turn into this Channel? that will abate a Lace from their Garment, or a Diſh from their Table, to beſtow upon the Neceſſities of the Poor? In a Word, we ought not only to be free from hurting, but be *a Tree of Life to our Neighbour.*

Let us then be convinced of our Guiltineſs in breach of this Precept. Men think it much if they can forgive, upon Acknowledgment and Submiſſion of thoſe that have injured them; but they aſpire not to this, cordially to forgive thoſe that ſtill continue to wrong and provoke them, to compaſſionate them, and pray for them, and repay all their Evil with Meekneſs and Good-will. *Inference.*

We conſider not how ſublime the Rule of Chriſtianity is, and how low our Spirits are, and how far off from it. *Be not overcome of Evil*, (ſays the Apoſtle) *but overcome Evil with Good*, Rom. xii. It is eaſy to overcome a Man that reſiſts not, but yields; to pardon Injury when it ceaſeth, and intreats Pardon: But when it holds out, and is ſo ſtout as ſtill to fight againſt that Goodneſs and Meekneſs that it meets withal, yet the Chriſtian ought to perſiſt in theſe, and overcome it with Good. And ſee our Saviour's Rule to them that will be his Diſciples, *Matth.* v. againſt Hatred and Wrath. Labour for humble Spirits. Pride is the Spring of Malice, and Deſire of Revenge, and of raſh Anger and Contention. This makes Men eaſily ſwell againſt any thing that croſſes them, becauſe they have laid down this with themſelves, that they deſerve to be obſerved and reſpected, and not croſs'd at all; and when they find it otherwiſe, it kindles them to Anger: And it is not the Degree of Provocation, but the different Temper of Mens Spirits makes them more or leſs ſubject to Anger. It matters not how great the Fire be, but where it falls.

Conſider firſt, that theſe turbulent Paſſions carry their

their Puniſhment along with them; they rankle and feſter the Soul, and fill it full of Pain and Diſturbance; whereas the Spirit of Meekneſs makes the Soul of a Chriſtian like the higheſt Region of the Air, conſtantly calm and ſerene: The Apoſtle ſpeaking of this Commandment of Love, ſays, *That the Commandments of God are not grievous.* Certainly there is ſuch a true Pleaſure in Meekneſs, forgiving of Injuries, and loving our very Enemies, that did Men know it, they would chuſe it for the very Delight and Sweetneſs of it, though there were no Command to enforce it.

2. Conſider, particularly againſt raſh Anger, how weak and fooliſh a thing it is, *Anger reſteth in the Boſom of Fools*, ſaith *Solomon.* A Fool's Breaſt is the very natural Place of Anger, where it dwells. But, as he ſays elſewhere, *A Man of Underſtanding is of an excellent Spirit*, Prov. xvii. 9. the Word is, a *cool Spirit.* What a ſenſeleſs Miſtake is it for Men to think it Strength and Greatneſs of Spirit to bear nothing, to be ſenſible of every Touch, and ſtand upon their Punctilio's? Is it not evident Weakneſs to be able to ſuffer nothing? We ſee the weakeſt Perſons moſt ſubject to Anger, Women, Children, and the Sick, and aged Perſons; old Age being both a continued Sickneſs, and a Childiſhneſs, as they call it, and as the Dregs of Man's Life turned into Vinegar: It is the Weakneſs of all theſe that makes them fretful *. In a Word, it is *the Glory of a Man to paſs by a Tranſgreſſion*; every one can be angry, and moſt are they that are weakeſt; but to be above it, and have it under Command, is the Advantage of thoſe that are truly wiſe, and therefore worthy of our Study to attain it.

3. That which ſhould moſt prevail with Chriſtians to

* Εἰς ὀξὺ τρέπεται τοῦτο τὸ λειπόμενον. *Omne infirmum naturâ querulum.*

to ſtudy Love and Meekneſs of Spirit, and a Propenſion to do Good to all, is the Conformity that is in this Temper to our Head and Redeemer Jeſus Chriſt, to partake of his Dove-like Spirit, *Learn of me* (ſays he) *for I am meek and lowly in Heart*, Gal. v. 20, 21, 22, 23. And this he hath given as the Commiſſion and Badge of his Diſciples, that as he loved them, ſo they love one another.

PRECEPT VII.

Thou ſhalt not commit Adultery.

As the Perverſeneſs of Nature hath found out crooked Ways, and ſinful Abuſes of things that we enjoy and uſe; the holy Law of God aims at the rectifying theſe Abuſes, and bounding and limiting our Ways by a ſtraight Rule.

And this Precept particularly bars us from all ſinful Uncleanneſs, under the Name of one Kind of it.

That anſwerably to our Condition or Eſtate of Life, whatſoever it is, ſingle, or married, we ought to endeavour that Cleanneſs, and Purity of Soul and Body, that becomes the Temples of the Holy Ghoſt.

I purpoſe not to reckon up particularly the ſeveral Sorts and Degrees of Sin of this Kind; for Chaſtity is a delicate tender Grace, and can ſcarce endure the much naming of itſelf, far leſs of thoſe things that are ſo contrary to it; though in the Law of God given to the People of the *Jews*, there is expreſs Mention of the groſs Abominations of this Kind, becauſe practiſed by the *Gentiles*, and to be forbidden them. And though the Apoſtle, writing to the *Gentiles* newly converted from thoſe Abominations, of neceſſity mentions Particulars of them; yet, further than that Neceſſity of reproving them, where they are in Cuſtom requires, he hates the very naming of them,

Eph. v. 3. 12. As the old *Roman* Satyriſts, while they ſeem to reprove Vice, rather teach it by their impudent Deſcriptions of it; the new *Roman* Caſuiſts, ſome of them, are as foul that Way.

It may ſuffice to regulate us in this, if we believe this Truth, that whatſoever is in this Kind, beſide the lawful Uſe of Marriage, is a Breach of this holy Law of God, whether it be in Action or in Words, or ſo much as in Thought. And, if this be true, (as it is, if we believe Truth itſelf, our Saviour's Interpretation) that an unchaſte Look, or Thought, make a Man guilty, then ſure whatſoever is beyond theſe, is more groſly ſinful.

Inference. What a ſhameful thing is it, that our holy Profeſſion of Religion ſhould be ſo diſhonoured by the abounding of Uncleanneſs amongſt us? In many it breaks forth ſcandalouſly; and if there be any that live in that way of Wickedneſs undiſcovered, and walk ſecretly in it; yet the pure Lord who perfectly ſees and hates it, will call them to account, and judge them, according to the Apoſtle's Word, *Heb.* xiii. 4. Conſider this likewiſe, any of you that have not lamented your former impure Converſation, but being reformed outwardly by your Years, or Condition of Life, yet never have inwardly repented, and been deeply humbled for the Sins of your Youth. True Converſion is not ſo light a Work: *David*, Pſal. xxv. remembers his former Sins, and prays earneſtly that God would not remember them againſt him: And on the contrary, you that think not on them, may juſtly fear that God will remember them, becauſe you yourſelves have forgot them.

They that give their Tongues the Liberty of ſcurrilous Jeſting, and impure Speeches, cannot but have filthy Hearts, their noiſom Breath argues Rottenneſs within.

Yea

Yea they that proceed no further in Uncleanneſs, than to entertain and lodge the Fancies or Thoughts of it, rolling them in their Beds, and delighting in them, even ſuch are exceeding guilty and abominable in the Sight of God, who doth not only ſee into the Heart, but moſt of all eyes and regards it. *Keep thy Heart above all keeping*, ſays *Solomon*, *for from thence are the Iſſues of Life.* Certainly, they that can diſpenſe with themſelves in theſe inward Heart Uncleanneſſes, and find no Remorſe, cannot think the Spirit of God dwells within them; for if he were there, he would be ſhewing his Diſcontent and Anger againſt that Unholineſs, which is ſo contrary to him.

And this they that have any Truth of Grace will find, that if they be not either free from the Aſſaults, or at leaſt thoſe filthy Birds, ſuch impure Thoughts be not perfectly beaten away, when they light on the Soul, if they ſtay but any time with them, although they afterwards do chaſe them out with Indignation; yet they do leave ſuch a Stain, as grieves and ſaddens the holy Spirit in them, and for a time they find it not act in Prayer, and in ſpiritual Comfort ſo chearfully as before. *Let no corrupt* (or rotten) *Communication proceed out of your Mouth*, ſays the Apoſtle, *and grieve not the holy Spirit:* Rotten Speech grieves the holy Spirit, and ſo do ſuch Thoughts too, which are a Man's Speech with himſelf; and therefore being moſt familiar and frequent with him, ought to be moſt regarded, and watched over. There is not any thing will more readily dry up the Sweetneſs and ſpiritual Moiſture of the Soul, and cauſe the Graces in it to wither, than the impure Fire of Luſt; therefore you that have any Beginnings of Grace, and would have it flouriſh, beware of this, and quench it in its firſt Sparkles; if you do not, it may in a little time σάπρ⊙.

riſe above your Power, and ſtill prove very dangerous.

Rules. If you would be freed from the Danger and Importunity of this Evil, make Uſe of theſe uſual and very uſeful Rules. 1. To be ſober and temperate in Diet, withdraw Fewel. 2. Be modeſt and circumſpect in your Carriage, guard your Ears, and Eyes, and watch over all your Deportment, beware of undue and dangerous Familiarities with any, upon what Pretence ſoever. 3. Be choice in your Society, for there is much in that. 4 In general, fly all Occaſions and Incentives to Uncleanneſs; but truly the ſolid Care muſt begin within, otherwiſe all theſe outward Remedies will prove but *empirick* Medicines, as they call them.

1. Firſt then, lean not upon moral Reſolves and particular Purpoſes againſt Uncleanneſs, but ſeek a total entire Change of the Heart, and to find the ſanctifying Spirit of Grace dwelling within you.

2. Labour to have the Heart poſſeſt with a deep Apprehenſion of the Holineſs and Purity of God, and then of his Preſence and Eye upon all thy Actions, yea thy moſt ſecret Thoughts. His Eye is more piercing than that any Wickedneſs can be hid from him, and more pure than to behold it without Indignation. The Darkneſs is as Noon-day to him. I cannot ſteal a Thought out of his Sight, though it be never ſo ſudden and ſhort. Then think, "If I "pretend to Communion and Converſe with my "God, he is all Holineſs, therefore Uncleanneſs "can never attain that to which I aſpire: What "Communion hath Light with Darkneſs, or Chriſt "with *Belial*, and ſhall I loſe or hazard the Sweetneſs of his Preſence for ſo baſe a Delight? How "can I offer that Heart to him in Prayer, that hath "been wallowing in the Mire of unclean Practice "or Imagination?" Reſolve to drive out the Aſ-

ſaults

faults that you are incident to: " How ſhall I do, " or think thus? My holy God is looking on me." This was *Joſeph*'s Preſervation, *Shall I do this Evil, and ſin againſt God?*

3. Acquaint yourſelves with ſpiritual Delights, and this will make a happy Diverſion from thoſe that are ſenſual and earthly. Somewhat a Man muſt have to delight in. It is the Philoſopher's Remark, that they that know not the true Pleaſure of the Mind, turn to the baſe Pleaſures of the Body.

Some moral Men ſeeking higher Delight of the Mind, in their Way have perſuaded themſelves to a generous Diſdain of their Bodies? How much more powerfully may ſupernatural Delights of the Soul, Righteouſneſs and Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, wean it from thoſe groſs ſenſual Pleaſures, that the Beaſts have in common with us, at leaſt from the immoderate Deſire, and all unlawful Purſuit of them. Nothing indignifies the Soul more than Luſt. When *David* had ſinn'd this Way, it had ſo made Havock of Grace within him, that he cries not only for cleanſing, but for a new Creation, as if all were undone, *Create in me a clean Heart*, &c. *Pſal.* li. and found it ſo ſlaviſh and ignoble a Sin, that he prays to be re-eſtabliſh'd by God with a free or noble Spirit.

4. Increaſe in the Love of Chriſt; for as that grows, there is a Decreaſe of the Love of Sin, yea, of the immoderate Love of all inferior Things: As the Sun-beams eat out the Fire, this divine and heavenly Love conſumes the other. All our Love is too ſcarce or poor for him, when it is recollected and drawn altogether to run only towards him; and therefore there is none to ſpare upon the Fleſh, and the Luſts of it, nor upon any Creature, but as he allows and appoints: The Senſe of his Love takes up the whole Soul, and he lodging in it, is that true

Agnus

Agnus caſtus that makes it chaſte, that Bundle of Myrrh that hath a Virtue to preſerve the Chriſtian from the Corruptions of Luſt.

That Love of Jeſus Chriſt is ſtrong as Death, kills all oppoſite Affections; and indeed it alone is worthy of the Soul, the noble immortal Soul. Oh how is it abaſed when it is drawn down to Senſuality, and ſo made a Slave to its Servant the Fleſh! *Major ſum & ad majora genitus* (could a *Roman* Philoſopher ſay) *quàm ut ſim mancipium mei corporis, I am greater, and born to greater Things than to be a Slave to my Body.* How unworthy is it, that being capable of the higheſt Good, the Fruition of God, we ſhould forget ourſelves ſo far as to ſerve vile Luſt, and forfeit the Happineſs and Pleaſures of Eternity? Far be it from us, God hath called us to *Holineſs*, and not to *Uncleanneſs*, ſays the Apoſtle.

Fly all unlawful and forbidden Delights; and thoſe that are lawful, do not engage your Hearts to them, love them not immoderately: And they can ſcarce be loved without Exceſs, if loved at all. Shall I ſay then, if you uſe them yet love them not, reſerve that for purer Enjoyments? Says not the Apoſtle this, *Let them that rejoice, be as if they rejoiced not*; and particularly, *They that marry, as if they married not?* And his Reaſon is weighty, *For the Faſhion of this World paſſeth away*, &c.

Remember to what a pure and excellent Condition we are called as Chriſtians, and with what a Price we are bought to be holy; and let it be our firm Purpoſe and Study to glorify God in our Souls and Bodies, for they are his.

PRE-

PRECEPT VIII.

Thou ſhalt not ſteal.

God is the God of Order, and not of Confuſion: It is he that hath authorized and appointed Propriety of Poſſeſſions unto Men, and withal that Society and Commerce amongſt them that ſerves for their mutual Good; and (Propriety reſerv'd) makes one Man in what he poſſeſſes uſeful and helpful to another: And hath given this Precept of his Law, to regulate them in theſe Things, to be the Rule of that which we call *Contentation* or *Juſtice*, Equity towards our Neighbour, in matter of his Goods or proper Poſſeſſions.

This then being the Scope of the Commandment, whatſoever breaks this Hedge, is, as comprehended under the Name of *Theft*, here forbidden. All Manner of Injuſtice and Wrong done to our Neighbour in his Eſtate, whether by Violence, or by Slight of hand, by Force or Fraud, yea if it be but ſo much as in Affection or Deſire; for (as we have often ſaid) the Law is ſpiritual, and binds not only the Hands but the Heart. *Scope.*

So then, not only groſs Robberies and Thefts are here forbidden, but all Oppreſſion and Extortion in Superiors, all Purloining and Unfaithfulneſs in Inferiors; too ſtrict Exaction in Maſters, and Slothfulneſs in Servants, or whatſoever elſe may tend to their Maſters Damage; all Bribery, and receiving of Gifts, to the perverting of Juſtice; all Deceit and over-reaching in Commerce, or trading, or bargaining; taking Advantage in buying or ſelling, or any Contract, upon the Ignorance or Simplicity of thoſe we deal withal; all Deſire and ſeeking of our Neighbour's Loſs to our Gain; all the Degrees of Sacri-

Sacrilege and Simony; all Idleneſs and Neglect in Mens particular Callings, by which they either impoveriſh themſelves, and are worſe than Infidels, not providing for their Families; or, if they have certain Proviſion by their Callings, in neglecting the Duties of them, they wrong thoſe from whom, or for whoſe ſakes they are ſo provided, as Magiſtrates and Miniſters, who have or ſhould have honourable Maintenance for their publick Service, the one in the Common-wealth, the other in the Church: As it is a great Sin to curtail or detain what is due that Way, ſo it is no leſs Wickedneſs in them, if they be remiſs and careleſs of thoſe Duties to which they are obliged for the publick Good. In a Word, whoſoever can digeſt any Kind of undue Gain to themſelves, or do any Prejudice to their Neighbour in the leaſt, are guilty; yea, they ſin againſt this Precept that do not with all their Power further the Advantage and Good of their Neighbour in his outward Condition, that do not help and relieve thoſe they ſee in Want, ſo far as their Ability reaches.

There is a Kind of Right that the Poor have to Supply; it is not merely arbitrary to you. Though they have not ſuch a Right as to take it at their own Hand, or to ſeek it at the Houſes of human Juſtice, yet they have ſuch a Right as that your Hand ought not to detain it. *With-hold not Good from them to whom it is due*, Prov. iii. 27. which is evidently meant (and Interpreters take it ſo) of all Kind of doing Good, even that of Charity and Beneficence to the Needy, as appears by the following Clauſe, *when it is in the Power of thine Hand to do it*, and the *Septuagint* εὐποιεῖν τὸν ἐνδεῆ. 'Tis due, they have a Right to it, though not ſuch as they can implead for before Mens Courts or Judicatures, yet in the Court of Conſcience, and in the Sight of God, it is duly theirs; the Word is, *From him that is Lord of it*

it. It is the Bread of the hungry that moulds by thee, and the Drink of the thirſty that ſowres by thee *. Although thou art in Poſſeſſion, haſt Superfluity by thee, what he wants is his by Right, he is Lord of it; for the Lord of all hath turn'd over his Right to thy poor Brother. The Lord himſelf needs it not; thy Goodneſs cannot reach him; he hath furniſh'd thee with ſuch as need it, and may be his Receivers, and have Warrant from him to take it up in his Stead: And be ſure he will acknowledge the Receipt of it; thou haſt his own Word and Writ for it, a Bill of Exchange under his own Hand, that what you give to the Poor be put upon his Accounts. *He that giveth to the Poor lendeth to the Lord, and he will repay it:* And again, *In that you did it unto one of theſe*, ſays our Saviour, *ye did it unto me.* It is the ſureſt and laſtingeſt Part of a Man's Eſtate that is put into their Hand, if God be *ſolvendo*, if he be a ſufficient Debtor †. It is Treaſure laid up in Heaven.

So then this Precept requires Uprightneſs and Equity in all our Dealings, a Deſire to right and advantage our Brethren as ourſelves, willing their Gain and Proſperity as our own; Diligence and Induſtry in our Callings, and giving to all others their Due. Though Men are not obliged to a ſottiſh Simplicity, but ought to endeavour ſo to underſtand their Affairs, that they may avoid Circumvention by others Craft; yet a prudent Simplicity is the right Stamp of a Chriſtian Mind, to be ſingle and ingenuous, and rather to ſuffer Loſs from others, than cauſe them any. In a Word, the Apoſtle's Rule is expreſs and full, 1 *Theſſ.* iv. 16. *That no Man overreach or defraud his Brother in any Matter*, and he adds a very forcible Reaſon, *becauſe the Lord is the*

* *Eſurientium panis eſt qui apud te muceſcit, & ſitientium potus qui apud te aceſcit.* Ambr.

† *Quas dederis ſolas ſemper habebis opes.*

Avenger of all ſuch; *as we have alſo* (ſays he) *fore-warned you and teſtified.* Men are ready to find out poor Shifts to deceive themſelves, when they have ſome way deceived their Brother; and to ſtop the Mouth of their own Conſcience with ſome Quibble, and ſome ſlight Excuſe, and force themſelves at length to believe they have done no wrong: Therefore the Apoſtle, to fright them out of their Shifts, ſets before them an exacter Judge, that cannot be deceived nor mocked, that ſhall one Day unvail the Conſcience, and blow away theſe vain ſelf Excuſes as Smoke; and that juſt Lord will puniſh all Injuſtice, *He is the Avenger of all ſuch.*

Inference. At the firſt View a Man would think the Breach of this Commandment concerns but few Perſons, ſome Thieves and Robbers, and ſome profeſt Deceivers, or if you add ſome couzening Tradeſmen and Merchants; but the Truth is, there is ſcarce any of the Commandments ſo univerſally and frequently broken, and whereof the Breach is ſo little obſerved, and therefore ſo ſeldom repented of by the greateſt Part. As the Apoſtle *James* ſays, *He is a perfect Man that offends not in his Words*; truly he is a rare Man that offends not, and that remarkably, if Men would remark themſelves, againſt this Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not ſteal.*

To ſay nothing of the Oppreſſion and hard Exactions of ſuch as are Superiors of Lands, grinding the Faces of the Poor, and ſqueezing them till the Blood come; and ſo putting in the ſame Blood of the Poor amongſt their Eſtates, that many times proves a Canker to all the reſt; and the Thieviſhneſs of Servants, and of the poorer Sort, making no Conſcience at all of whatſoever they can filch from their Maſters, or thoſe that are richer than they, counting all they can ſnatch good Booty and lawful Prize: To paſs by likewiſe the particular Deceits

that

that are uſual in ſeveral Callings, and are incorporate with them through long Cuſtom, and become a Part of the Myſtery of thoſe Callings, and therefore Men diſpenſe with themſelves in them, as the inſeparable Sin of their Calling, and have no Remorſe for them: Not to inſiſt on theſe and ſuch like, conſider how frequently this *Meum & Tuum*, *Mine and Thine*, proves the Apple of Striſe betwixt the neareſt Friends, and divides their Affections, and begets Debates amongſt them; Parents, and Children, and Brethren, *&c.* And certainly there is always ſome unjuſt Deſire on one Side in thoſe Contentions, and ſometimes on both Sides. How few are there that have Hearts ſo weaned from the World, as in all Things to prefer the ſmalleſt Point of Equity to the greateſt Temptation of Gain? that in their Affairs, and all that concerns them, are univerſally careful to deal with an even Hand, and even Heart; and to keep cloſe to that Golden Rule drawn in Nature, but almoſt loſt and ſmothered in the Rubbiſh and Corruption of Nature, but drawn a-new by our Saviour's Hand, not only in his Goſpel, but in the Hearts of his real Followers, *That which thou wouldeſt have others do to thee, do thou unto them:* That when they have any thing to tranſact, wherein is their Brother's Intereſt and their own, do in their Thoughts change Places with him, ſet him in their own Room, and themſelves in his, and deal with him after that Manner; that think, "What would "I be willing to have done to me were I he, that "ſame will I do to him? Were I in that poor Man's "Condition that begs an Alms, would I not rather "have ſome Relief, than a churliſh, or at leaſt, an "empty Anſwer? Were I he that buys, would I "not, and might I not juſtly and reaſonably will to "have it ſo, that no more be exacted of me than the "right and due Price? then ſo will I uſe him."

How few that walk (I ſay) by this Rule? and yet all that do not thus, are Breakers of this Commandment in the Sight of God.

How few that are inviolable Obſervers of Equity, and are truly liberal and bountiful anſwerably to their Power? that will ſometimes on purpoſe bate a Diſh from their Table, or a Lace from their Garment, not to make their Stock greater, but to beſtow on the Poor? that are truly deſirous of the Good and Proſperity of others, and further it all they can?

'Tis to be like God, this is the particular, *Matth.* v. wherein Likeneſs to our heavenly Father is preſt; and this is meant by *Homo homini Deus.* Certainly were we acquainted with it, it is more true Delight to be not only juſt but liberal, than to poſſeſs *much*; it is not to poſſeſs, but to be poſſeſt by it, to *have Heaps*, and no Heart nor Power to uſe them. He that is thus, doth not only defraud others but himſelf, ſteals* from his own Neceſſities to ſacrifice to his God, his Cheſt or Bag. When a Man hath ſuch a Sum, and though he hath Uſe for it dares not break it, what is it better than if it were ſtill under Ground in the Mine, it is no more at his Service; yea, ſo much the worſe that he is racked betwixt Plenty and Want, betwixt having and not having it.

Both the Covetous and the Prodigal ſin againſt this Commandment: The Covetous by unjuſt ways of gaining, and unjuſt keeping what he hath gained, keeping it up both from others and himſelf: And the Prodigal by Profuſeneſs, making fooliſh Wants to himſelf, that drive him upon unjuſt ways of Supply†. Thus he that is prodigal muſt be covetous too; and though Men think not ſo, theſe two Vices that ſeem ſo oppoſite, not only may, but do often dwell together, and Covetouſneſs is Prodigality's Purveyor, being

* *Quicquid omnibus abſtulit, ſibi negat.*

† *Turpiter amittens quod turpius reparet.* Sen.

being Fire for it to feed it, for otherwiſe it could not ſubſiſt, but would ſtarve within a while. Here then both Avarice and Prodigality are condemned; only true Equity, and frugal and wiſe Liberality are Obedience to it.

The main Cauſes of all unjuſt and illiberal Dealing are theſe two, 1. Diffidence or Diſtruſt of the divine Providence and Goodneſs. 2. And that Πλεονεξία, that ſame *Amor ſceleratus habendi, the fond Deſire of having much.*

1. When a Man doth not fully truſt God with providing for him, and bleſſing him in juſt and lawful Ways, but apprehends Want unleſs he take ſome more Liberty and Elbow-room; this makes him ſtep now and then out of the Way, to catch at undue Gain by Fraud and Over-reaching, or ſome ſuch Way: But this is a moſt fooliſh Courſe, this is to break looſe out of God's fatherly Hand, and ſo to forego all that we can look for from him, and to take Ways of our own, to chuſe rather to go a ſhifting for ourſelves in the crooked and accurſed Ways of Unrighteouſneſs, than to be at his providing. Labour therefore for fixed Belief of his Wiſdom and Goodneſs, and All-ſufficiency, and then the greateſt Straits and Wants will not drive you to any indirect Ways, wherein you run from him, but will ſtill draw you nearer to himſelf, and there you will ſtay and wait upon his Hand till he ſupply you.

2. Deſire of having much, or Covetouſneſs, whether it be to hoard up or laviſh out. But this is a Madneſs; this Deſire of having much is never cured by having much, it is an unſatiable * Dog-hunger.

That known Determination of the Moraliſt was the moſt true, that to be truly rich, is not to have much, but to deſire little; labour then not to deſire much, or rather deſire much, deſire to have the Lord

* Βυλίμια, *vel canina fames.*

Lord for your Portion; † and if you indeed deſire him, you ſhall have him, and if you have him, you cannot but be ſatisfied, for he is all: To him therefore be all Praiſe, Honour, and Glory for ever. *Amen.*

PRECEPT IX.

Thou ſhalt not bear falſe Witneſs againſt thy Neighbour.

The Apoſtle St. *James*, in that ſharp but moſt true Cenſure of the Tongue, might well call it an *unruly Evil.* There are but ten Precepts or Words of the Law of God, and you ſee two of them, ſo far as concerns the outward Organ and Vent of the Sins there forbidden, are beſtowed on it, *tending*, if not only, yet mainly to keep it in order; one in the firſt Table, and this other in the ſecond, as being ready to fly out both againſt God and Man, if not thus bridled.

The End of the Commandment is to guard the good Name of Men from Injury, as the former doth his Goods; this Poſſeſſion being no leſs, yea, much more precious than the other: And, becauſe the great Robber and Murtherer of a good Name, is the miſchievous detracting Tongue, acted by a malignant Heart; it requires in the Heart a charitable Tenderneſs of the good Name of our Brethren, and that will certainly prove Truth and charitable Speech in the Tongue.

Though Divines here uſually ſpeak of Lying, in the general Notion and Extent of it, and not amiſs, being moſt of all exerciſed in the Kind here mentioned; yet there be ſuch Lies, as may be more fitly reputed a Breach of ſome other Commandment; and poſſibly, the Sin of lying in general, as it is a Lie, a Diſcrepance of the Speech from the Mind, and ſo

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† *Non eſt illud deſiderium,* πλεονεξία *ſed* πανεξία.

a ſubverting of the divine Ordinance ſet in Nature, making that which he hath made the Interpreter of the Mind, to be the Diſguiſer of it, and withal diſregarding God as the Searcher of the Heart, and ſovereign Witneſs of Truth, and Avenger of Falſhood; I ſay, thus it may poſſibly be more proper to refer it to another Commandment, particularly to the third: But it imports not much to be very punctual in this; it is ſeldom or never that one Commandment is broke alone, moſt Sins are complicate Diſobedience, and in ſome Sins, the Breach of many at once is very apparent. As to inſtance, in Perjury, if it be to teſtify a Falſhood againſt our Brethren, both the third Commandment and this ninth are violate at once; and if it be in ſuch a thing as toucheth his Life, the ſixth likewiſe ſuffers with them.

This Perjury or falſe Teſtimony in a publick judiciary Way, is, we ſee, by the expreſs Words and Letter of the Command forbidden, as the higheſt and moſt hainous Wrong of this Kind *: But under the Name of this (as it is in the other Commandments) all the other Kinds and Degrees of Offence againſt our Neighbours good Name are compriſed, 1. All private Ways of Calumny and falſe Imputation. 2. All ungrounded and falſe Surmiſes or Suſpicions, all uncharitable Conſtruction of others Actions and Carriage. 3. Strict remarking of the Faults of others, without any Calling ſo to do, or honeſt Intention of their Good; which appears, if, having obſerved any thing that of Truth is reprovable, we ſeek not to reclaim them by ſecret and friendly Admonition, but paſſing by themſelves divulge it abroad to others: For this is a moſt fooliſh Self-deceit to think, that becauſe it is not forged, but true that thou ſpeakeſt, this keeps thee free of the Commandment; no,

* *Ut teſtis falſi aut teſtimonium falſi non dices aut reſpondebis.*

no, thy falſe Intention and Malice * makes it Calumny and Falſhood in thee, although for the Matter of it, what thou ſayeſt be moſt true; all thou gaineſt by it is, that thou doſt tumble and bemire thyſelf in the Sin of another, and makeſt it poſſibly more thine, than it is his own, that committed it; for he, may be, hath ſome Touch of Remorſe for it; whereas it is evident thou delighteſt in it: And tho' thou preface it with a whining feigned Regret and Semblance of pitying him, and add withal ſome Word of commending him in ſomewhat elſe; this is but the gilding and ſugaring the Pill to make Men ſwallow it the more eaſily, and thy bitter Malice paſs unperceived. They that by their Calling ought to watch over the Lives of others, muſt do it faithfully and diligently, admoniſhing and rebuking privately; and where that prevails not, they may, yea, they ought to do it more publickly, but all in Love, ſeeking nothing but the Glory of God and the Salvation of Souls. 4. Eaſy hearing and entertaining of Miſreports and Detraction when others ſpeak them, *Exod.* xxiii. 1. this is that which maintains and gives Subſiſtance to Calumny, otherwiſe it would ſtarve and dy of itſelf, if no Body took it in and gave it Lodging. When Malice pours it out, if our Ears be ſhut againſt it, and there be no Veſſel to receive it, it would fall like Water upon the Ground, and could no more be gathered up; but there is that ſame buſy Humour that Men have, it is very buſy, and yet the moſt have of it more or leſs, a kind of Delight and Contentment to hear Evil of others, unleſs it be of ſuch as they affect; to hear others ſlighted and diſeſteemed, that they readily drink in not without ſome Pleaſure, whatſoever is ſpoken of this Kind. *The Ear trieth the Words* (as he ſays in *Job*) as

* Ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, Eph. iv. *We muſt not only ſpeak the Truth, but in Love.*

as the Mouth taſteth Meats, but certainly the moſt Ears are perverſe and diſtempered in their Taſte, as ſome kind of Palates are; can find Sweetneſs in ſowre Calumny. But, becauſe Men underſtand one anothers Diet in this, that the moſt are ſo; this is the very thing that keeps up the Trade, makes Backbiting and Detractions abound ſo in the World, and verifies that known Obſervation in the moſt, that the Slanderer wounds three at once, himſelf, him he ſpeaks of, and him that hears: For this third, truly it is in his Option to be none of the Number; if he will, he may ſhift his Part of the Blow, by not believing the Slander; yea, may beat it back again with Eaſe upon the Slanderer himſelf by a Check or Frown, and add that Stroke of a Repulſe to the Wound of Guiltineſs he gives himſelf. 5. They offend that ſeek in any Kind, at the Expence of the good Name and Eſteem of others, to increaſe their own, out of others Ruins to make up themſelves *; and therefore pull down as much as they can, and are glad to have others to help them to detract from the Repute of their Brethren, particularly, any that are in Likelihood to ſurpaſs and obſcure them; and for this Reaſon incline always rather to hear and ſpeak of the Imperfections and Diſpraiſe of others, than to their Advantage, and would willingly (*Ottoman* like) kill the good Name of their Brethren, that theirs may reign alone †. This is a vile Diſeaſe, and ſuch as cannot be incident to any Mind that is truly virtuous and gracious; no, ſuch need not this baſe diſhoneſt Way to raiſe themſelves, but are glad to

* *Ex alieni nominis jactura gradum ſibi faciunt ad gloriam.* Saluſt.

† *The Rabbins frequently condemn this.* Hammith Cabbed, *&c. qui honorat ſe ex ignominia ſocii ſui, non habet partem in ſeculo venturo.* Bereſ. Rab. *Item, qui per contemptum aliorum laudem ſuam quarit, miſerrimus eſt omnium hominum. Quis eſt honore dignus? qui honorat alios homines.* Aboth. c. 4.

ſee Virtue, and whatſoever is Praiſe-worthy, to flouriſh in whomſoever; theſe are Lovers of God indeed, and his Glory, and not their own; and therefore as all he beſtows on themſelves, they venture back the Honour of it to him, ſo they are glad to ſee many enriched with his beſt Gifts; for ſeeing all Good that all have belongs to God, as the ſovereign Owner and Diſpenſer, this contents and rejoices his Children when they ſee many partake of his Bounty, for the more is his Glory: And as in Love to their Brethren, they are always willing to take notice of what is commendable in them, and to commend it, ſo they do this the more willingly, becauſe they know that all Praiſe of Goodneſs at laſt terminates and ends in God, as *Solomon* ſays of the Rivers, *Unto the Place from whence they come, thither they return again.* 6. They ſin againſt this Commandment, that although they no way wrong their Neighbours good Name, yet are not careful to do their utmoſt to right it when it ſuffers, to remove Aſperſions from them, and to clear them all that may be.

For this is here required, to deſire and delight in, and further the good Name of others, even as our own, to look moſt willingly on the faireſt Side of their Actions, and take them in the beſt Senſe, and be as inventive of favourable Conſtructions (yet without favouring Vice) as Malice is witty to miſinterpret to the worſt: To obſerve the commendable Virtues of our Brethren, and paſs by their Failings; as many, like ſcurvy Flies, skip over what is ſound in Men, and love to ſit upon their Sores.

Infer. It is lamentable to conſider how much this Evil of mutual Detraction, and ſupplanting the good Name one of another is rooted in Man's corrupt Nature, and how it ſpreads and grows in their Converſe, as the Apoſtle St. *Paul* cites it out of the *Pſalmiſt*, as the Deſcription of our Nature,

Their

Their Throat is an open Sepulchre, they have deceitful Tongues, and the Poiſon of Aſps is under their Lips, Rom. iii. Their Throat an open Sepulchre, full of the Bones as it were of others good Names that they have devoured: And, *Rom.* i. amongſt other their Endowments, they are Whiſperers, Backbiters, deſpiteful. But it is ſtrange that Chriſtians ſhould retain ſo much of theſe Evils, that profeſs themſelves renewed, and ſanctified, and guided by the Spirit of God. Conſider in your Viſits, and Diſcourſes, if ſomething of this Kind doth not entertain you often, and laviſh away that time you might ſpend in mutual Edifications, abuſing it to deſcant upon the Actions and Life of others, in a Way as neither concerns nor profits us, taking an impertinent fooliſh Delight in enquiring and knowing how this Party lives, and the other *. This is a very common Diſeaſe, as *Nazianzen* obſerves; and thus Men are moſt Strangers at home, have not Leiſure to ſtudy and know and cenſure themſelves, they are ſo buſied about others. It may be there is not always a Height of Malice in their Diſcourſes, but yet by much Babling to no Purpoſe, they ſlide into idle Detraction and Cenſure of others beſides their Intention, for *in Multitude of Words there wants not Sin.*

And the greateſt Part are ſo accuſtomed to this Way, that if they be put out of it, they muſt ſit dumb and ſay nothing. There is, I confeſs, a prudent Obſervation of the Actions of others, a reading of Men, as they call it, and it may be by a Chriſtian done with Chriſtian Prudence and Benefit; and there may be too an uſeful Way of Mens imparting their Obſervation of this Kind one to another concerning the Good and Evil, the Abilities more or leſs

* *Curioſum genus ad cognoſcendam vitam alienam, deſidioſum ad corrigendam ſuam.* Aug. conf. l. 10. cap. 3. ἐσὲν ἔτως ἤδυ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὡς τὸ λαλεῖν τὰ ἀλλότρια. Orat. 1.

that they remark in the World; but truly it is hard to find ſuch as can do this a-right, and know they agree in their Purpoſe with honeſt harmleſs Minds, intending Evil to none, but Good to themſelves, and admitting of nothing but what ſuits with this. Amongſt a Throng of Acquaintance a Man ſhall, it may be, find very few by whoſe Converſation he may be really bettered, and that return him ſome Benefit for the Expence of his time in their Society. Howſoever, beware of ſuch as delight in Vanity and Lying, and defaming of others, and withdraw yourſelves from them, and ſet a Watch before your own Lips; learn to know the fit Seaſon of Silence and Speech, for that is a very great Point of Wiſdom, and will help very much to the obſerving this Precept, to give your Tongue to be governed by Wiſdom and Piety; let it not be as a thorny Buſh pricking and hurting thoſe that are about you, not altogether a barren Tree yielding nothing, but a fruitful Tree, a *Tree of Life to your Neighbour*, as *Solomon* calls the Tongue of the Righteous.

And let your Hearts be poſſeſt with thoſe two excellent Graces, Humility and Charity, then will your Tongue not be in danger of hurting your Neighbour, for it is Pride and Self-love makes Men delight in that. Thoſe are the Idols to which Men make Sacrifice of the good Name and Reputation of others. The humble Man delights in Self-diſeſteem, and is glad to ſee his Brethrens Name flouriſh, it is pleaſing Muſick to him to hear of the Virtues of others acknowledged and commended, and a harſh Diſcord to his lowly Thoughts to hear any thing of his own. And the other, Charity, *thinks no Evil*, is ſo far from caſting falſe Aſperſions on any, that it rather caſts a Veil upon true Failings and Blemiſhes, *Love covers a Multitude of Sins*, it is like God's Love

that

that begets it, which covers all the Sins of his own Children.

PRECEPT X.

Thou ſhalt not covet, &c.

It is a known Truth, that there is no ſound Cure of Diſeaſes without the Removal of their inward Cauſe; therefore this ſecond Table of the Law, containing the Rule of Equity for the Redreſs of Unrighteouſneſs in Mens Dealing one with another, doth in this laſt Precept of it ſtrike at the very Root of that Unrighteouſneſs, the corrupt Deſires and evil Concupiſcence of the Heart, *Thou ſhalt not covet*, &c.

The *Romiſh* Diviſion of this into two, is ſo groſly abſurd, and ſo contrary both to the Voice of Antiquity and Reaſon, that it needs not ſtay us much to ſhew it ſuch. The thing forbidden is one, *Thou ſhalt not covet*; and if the ſeveral things not to be coveted divide it, it will be five or ſix, as well as two: Though it be *Peter's* pretended Sword makes the Diviſion, yet certainly it is not *Paul's* ὀρθοτομεῖν, not a dividing of the Word aright, but cutting it as it were beſides the Joint. The Truth is, they would never have miſtook ſo far as to have offered at this Diviſion, were they not driven upon it by an evil Neceſſity of their own making; becauſe they have quite cut out the ſecond, they are forced, for making up the Number, to cut this in two. This is but to ſalve a firſt Wrong with a ſecond, it is *Vitium primæ concoctionis quod non corrigitur in ſecunda*, as they ſpeak; having ſmothered one Commandment, they would have this divided, as the Harlot the living Child. The Subject of this Commandment, that which it forbids is not I confeſs Original Sin in its Nature and whole Latitude; no, nor all kind of ſinful Motions

tions immediately ariſing from it, but ſuch as concern human things, belonging to this ſecond Table as their Rule; as is clear in all the Particulars named in the Commandment, and the general Word that cloſes it including the reſt, and all other things of that Kind, *Nor any thing that is thy Neighbours.* Nor is it needful (with others) for the diſtinguiſhing this Precept from the reſt, to call this Concupiſcence here forbidden, only the firſt Riſings of it in the Heart, without Conſent, whereas the other Commandments forbid the Conſent of the Will; I conceive there is no Danger to ſay, that both are forbidden, both in this and the reſt, but in this more expreſly.

For what great Neceſſity is there of ſuch ſubtle diſtinguiſhing? May not this be ſufficient, that what is included in the other Commandments duly underſtood, it pleaſed the Divine Wiſdom to deliver in this laſt more expreſly, that none might pretend Ignorance, and ſo to provide for the more exact Obſervance of Juſtice and Equity amongſt Men in their Actions, by a particular Law given to the Heart, the Fountain of them, regulating it in its Diſpoſition and Motions, even the very firſt Stirrings of it, which do moſt diſcover its Diſpoſition?

And that this is no Tautology, nor a ſuperfluous Labour, unſuiting the exquiſite Brevity of this Law, we will eaſily confeſs, if we conſider, that natural Hypocriſy and Self-indulgence that is in Men, that makes them ſtill leſs regard the Temper and Actings of their Hearts, than their outward Carriage, notwithſtanding this expreſs Commandment concerning it; how much more would they have thought their Thoughts, at leaſt ſuch as proceed not to full Conſent, exempted from the Law, if there had been nothing ſpoke of them, but they only included in the other Precepts? We know how the Doctors of *Rome* exte-

extenuate the Matter, and how favourable their Opinion is in this Point, notwithſtanding this clear Voice of the Law of God condemning all Concupiſcence. The Apoſtle St. *Paul* confeſſes ingenuouſly his own Short-ſightedneſs, though a *Phariſee* inſtructed in the Law, that unleſs the Law had ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not luſt*, Rom. vii. he had not found it out in the other Commandments, nor known the Sinfulneſs of it.

This all-wiſe Lawgiver knew both the Blindneſs of Man's Mind, and the Hypocriſy and Deceitfulneſs of his Heart, and therefore takes away all Pretext, and turns him out of all Excuſe, giving this laſt Commandment expreſly concerning the Heart, and ſo teaching him the exact and ſpiritual Nature of all the reſt.

This Commandment purſues the Iniquity of Man into its Beginning and Source. Our Saviour calls the evil Heart, an *evil Treaſure*; it is an inexhauſtible Treaſure of Evil, yea it diminiſheth not at all, but increaſeth rather by ſpending: The acting of Sin, confirming and augmenting the corrupt Habit of it in the Heart, *Out of this evil Treaſure iſſue forth thoſe Pollutions that defile the whole Man, evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries*, &c. *Matt.* xv.

It is not proper here to ſpeak at large of the firſt Motions of Sin in general, and of the way to difference (if any ſuch can be given as certain) the Injections of Satan; evil Thoughts darted in by him, and ſuch as ſpring immediately from that Corruption that lodgeth within our own Breaſts, and other Things that concern the Subject: Only this we ought to obſerve as pertinent and uſeful, that if we did conſider the Purity of the Law of God, and the Impurity of our own Hearts, the continual Riſings of ſinful Concupiſcences within us, that ſtain us and all our Actions, this would lay us a great deal lower

in

in our own Opinion than uſually we are, *The Law is ſpiritual, but I am carnal, ſold under Sin*, ſays the Apoſtle.

Men think it is well with them, and they pleaſe themſelves to think ſo, and glory in it, that their whole Life hath been outwardly unblameable, and poſſibly free from the ſecret Commiſſion of groſs Sins: But would they that are thus moſt ſpotleſs, look a little deeper inward upon the inceſſant Workings of vain ſinful Thoughts, that at leaſt touch upon the Affection, and ſtir it ſomewhat; and conſider their Hearts naturally like boiling Pots, ſtill ſending up of this Scum of evil Concupiſcence, and as a Fountain caſteth forth her Waters, as *Jeremy* ſpeaks, this bitter Poiſon-ſpring ſtill ſtreaming forth, and even in the beſt not fully dried up.

There are three Tranſgreſſions, * ſay the *Talmudiſts*, from which a Man can no Day ever in this Life be free; the Thoughts of Sin, Wandrings in Prayer, and an evil Tongue.

Certainly the due Sight of theſe would abate much of thoſe gay Thoughts that any can have of themſelves, and from the beſt and moſt ſenſible would draw out the Apoſtle's Word, *O wretched Man that I am, who ſhall deliver me*, &c. *Rom.* vii. 24. There is nothing that doth more certainly both humble and grieve the godly Man, than the Senſe of this; and becauſe till then it will not ceaſe to vex him, nothing makes him more long for the Day of his full Deliverance, and makes him cry, *Uſquequo Domine, uſquequo? O how long O Lord, how long?*

2. We

* *Tres ſunt tranſgreſſiones, à quibus homo nullo die, inquiunt Talmudici, nunquam in hac vita liberabitur, cogitationes peccati, attentio orationis,* (i. e. *quod nunquam ſatis attentè per omnem attentionem orare poſſit*;) *& lingua mala.* Bava. Boſca. f. 1342.

2. We are taught by this Commandment that great Point of ſpiritual Prudence, to obſerve the Beginnings and Conception of Sin within us, and to cruſh it then when it is weakeſt, before it paſs on in its uſual Gradation, as the Apoſtle St. *James* makes it, *Ja.* i. 14, 15. If it draw us away but to hear it, it will entice us, take us with Delight, and then it will by that work us to conſent, and having ſo conceiv'd it will bring forth Sin, and Sin finiſh'd will bring forth Death.

3. Becauſe (as we ſee) the very Concupiſcence itſelf, though it proceed no further, pollutes and leaves a Stain behind it; this calls for our Diligence, to ſeek that Renovation and habitual Purity of Heart infus'd from above, and the daily Increaſe of it, being begun, that may free us more and more from that deprav'd Concupiſcence and the Defilements of it. Think it not enough to cleanſe the Tongue and the Hands, but above all endeavour for Cleanneſs of Heart, and that will keep all the reſt clean, *Ja.* iv. 8. *Jer.* iv. 14.

The Concupiſcence particularly here forbid, we ſee, is an inordinate Deſire, or the leaſt Beginning of ſuch a Deſire of thoſe outward Things that belong not to us, *Thy Neighbour's Houſe*, &c. for all Breach of the other Commandments of this ſecond Table have their Riſe and Beginning from ſuch Deſire; therefore this is ſet laſt, as the Hedge to guard all the reſt from Violation: For certainly he that flies the leaſt Motion of a wrongful Thought, will never proceed to any injurious Word or Action. So then, this Commandment is broken by the leaſt envious Look upon any Good of others, or the leaſt Bendings of Mind after it for ourſelves, and by that common Miſchief of Self-love, as the very thing that gives Life to all ſuch undue Deſires, and by that common Folly of Diſcontent at our own Eſtate, which begets

a wiſhing for that of others; and this, though it be not joined with an expreſs Deſire of their Loſs or Hurt, yet becauſe it is the Seed and Principle of Injuſtice, therefore it is ſinful, and here forbidden.

And on the contrary, much of the Obſervance of this Precept lies in that αὐτάρκεια, that Contentedneſs and Satisfaction of Mind with our own Eſtate, which will ſurely keep us free from this diſorder'd coveting. Therefore primely labour to have that wiſe and ſweet Contentation dwelling within you, and baniſh all contrary Thoughts, by theſe and other ſuch like Conſiderations,

1. If you do indeed believe that it is the ſovereign Hand of God that *divides to the Nations their Inheritance*, as *Moſes* ſpeaks, *Deut.* xxxii. 8. and ſo likewiſe to particular Men, that he carves to every one their Condition and Place in the World, you cannot but think he hath done it more wiſely than Men could do for themſelves. They could never agree upon it, every Man would think it beſt for himſelf to be in the beſt and higheſt Condition, and that is not poſſible; but it is beſt for the making up of the Univerſe, that there be thoſe Differences God hath made, and from the higheſt to the loweſt he hath ſet each one in that Station he thought good. There is not a common Soldier in an Army but would wiſh to be a Commander, and ſo if each might have his Will, all would command and none obey. The like holds in Maſters and Servants, and in all ſuch other Differences. So then, ſeeing thoſe Differences are in the World, and ſeeing it wholly belongs to him that rules the World to diſpoſe of them, our Part is no more but contentedly to accept of his Diſpoſe, and to ſerve him in the Station where he hath ſet us.

2. If you be ſuch as have Evidence you are the Children of God, then you know he doth not only allot

allot your Condition wiſely, but withal in peculiar Love and Favour; he perfectly knows what outward Eſtate is particularly fitteſt for you, and will conduce moſt to your higheſt Good, and will not miſs to give you that, and no other. And certainly it is true in matter of Eſtate, as of our Garments, not that which is largeſt, but that which fits us beſt, is beſt for us.

3. Conſider that no outward Condition hath Contentment in it of itſelf, this muſt ariſe from ſomewhat within: Men ſee the great Attendance and Train of Servants that wait upon Princes and other great Perſons, but they ſee not the Train of Cares and perplexing Thoughts that many times go along too, and are more inſeparable Attendants than any of the reſt; they ſee their fine Cloaths and ſtately Buildings, but they ſee not the ſecret Malecontents and Vexations that dwell with them, and are the very Linings of their rich Apparel. Light Things often diſcontent them; look but on their very Paſtimes and Recreations, they are ſometimes as much troubled with Diſappointment in thoſe, as the poor Man is wearied with his Labour. It was not a much greater Croſs that vex'd *Haman*; all his Advancement avail'd not without *Mordecai*'s Courteſy: A ſtrange Diſeaſe, that he felt more the Pain of another Man's ſtiff Knee, than the Contentment of all his Honours. But whoſo knew their deeper Vexations would admire them leſs, when croſs'd in their Ambition or Friends, or the Husband and Wife not finding that Harmony of Diſpoſitions and Affections: Few or none but have ſomething that a Man would willingly leave out, if he were for his Wiſh to be in their Condition. The ſhorter and ſurer Way then to Contentment, is, to be contentedly what he is.

4. Conſider thoſe that are below you, and in a far meaner Condition, and by that argue yourſelf, not only to Contentment, but to Thankfulneſs. We pervert all, when we look below us, it raiſes our Pride; and when above us, it caſts us into Diſcontent: Might we not as well contrariwiſe draw Humility out of the one, and Contentment out of the other.

5. Seek to be aſſur'd that God is yours, then whatſoever others poſſeſs, you will be ſure not to covet it, nor envy them. Thoſe that have moſt, you will pity, if they want him; and thoſe that have him, you will have no Evil at them for ſharing with you, but love them the more: For that infinite Good is enough for all that chuſe him, and none do ſo but thoſe whom he hath firſt choſen in eternal Love.

A DISCOURSE ON

MATTHEW XXII. 37, 38, 39.

Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind; and thy Neighbour as thyſelf.

THE Wiſdom and Meekneſs of our Saviour is the more remarkable, and ſhines the brighter, by the Malice of his Adverſaries; and their Cavils and tempting Queſtions occaſion our Benefit and Inſtruction, Thus here.

We ſee the Words are the Sum of the whole Law, and they are taken out of the Book of the Law: They are called *two Commandments*; the former is the Sum of the firſt, the latter of the ſecond Table. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God*, &c. *That is*, ſays our Saviour, *the firſt and great Commandment.* Our firſt Obligement is to God, and through him and for his Sake to Men: *The ſecond like to it.*

Seems it not rather contrary than like to the former; whereas in the former the whole Stream of Love is directed in one undivided Current towards God, this other Commandment ſeems to cut up a new Channel for it, and to turn a great part of it to Men, *Thy Neighbour as thyſelf?* No, they are not contrary, if we take them right; yea, they do not only agree, but are inſeparable; they do not divide our Love, but they ſet it in its right Courſe; firſt wholly to God, as the ſovereign Good, and only for him-

himſelf worthy to be loved; and then back from him, it is according to his own Will derived downwards to our Neighbour; for then only we love both ourſelves and others aright, when we make our Love to him the Reaſon and the Rule of both*. So then our Love is to be immediately divided betwixt him and our Neighbour, or any Creature, but is firſt all to be beſtowed on him, and then he diffuſes by way of Reflexion ſo much of it upon others as he thinks fit; being all in his Hands, it is at his Diſpoſe, and that which he diſpoſes elſewhere as here, *(Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf)* it is not taken off from him, but abiding ſtill in him, as in its natural Place: As Light doth in the Sun, flows forth from him by ſuch an Emanation as divides it not; as Beams flow forth from the Sun and enlighten the Air, and yet are not cut off from it.

So then the ſecond is like unto the firſt, becauſe it ſprings from it, and depends on it, it commands the ſame Affection; Love in the former placed on God, and in this extended from him to our Neighbour. And like in this too, that as the former is the Sum of the firſt Table, and ſo the firſt and great Commandment; ſo this is the Sum of the ſecond Table, and therefore next unto it in Greatneſs and Importance.

All the Precepts that can be found in the Law and Prophets are reducible to theſe, and all Obedience depends upon this Love. 1. Conſider this, how thoſe are the Sum of this Law. 2. Particularly in themſelves.

Ver. 40.

Not only becauſe it is Love facilitates all Obedience, and is the true Principle of it, that makes it both eaſy to us, and acceptable to God; but beſides this,

* *Minus enim te amat, qui aliquid præter te amat, & non propter te. Incipiat homo amare Deum, & non amabit in homine niſi Deum.* Aug.

this, that Love diſpoſes the Soul for all kind of Obedience, this very Act of Love is in effect all that is commanded in the Law. For the firſt laid to the firſt Table, it is ſo much one with the firſt Commandment, that it expreſſes moſt fitly the Poſitive of it, oppoſite to that which is there forbidden, " *Thou ſhalt have no other Gods before me*, but 1 *Com.*
" ſhalt have me alone for thy God, or be-
" ſtow all Divine Affection, and all Worſhip that
" is the Sign and Expreſſion of it, upon me only,
" *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy*
" *Heart*, &c. And if thou loveſt me alone, 2 *Com.*
" thou wilt not decline to any kind of falſe Wor-
" ſhip, that were to vitiate thy Affection, and to
" break that conjugal Love and Fidelity to which
" thou art bound by Covenant, being my People as
" by a ſpiritual Marriage." Therefore is Idolatry ſo frequently called, in the Phraſe of the Prophets, *Adultery* and *Uncleanneſs:* And in the Letter of that Commandment, the Lord uſes that Word, which in its uſual Senſe is conjugal, and relates to Marriage, *I am a jealous God*; and in the Cloſe of that Precept expreſſeth particularly this Affection of Love, as particularly intereſs'd in it, though extended to all the reſt, *I ſhew Mercy to Thouſands of them that love me.*

Is it not a genuine Property of Love to 3 *Com.*
honour and reſpect the Name of thoſe whom we love, and therefore it is altogether inconſiſtent with the Love of God to vilify and abuſe his Name?

They that underſtand the true Uſe of that 4 *Com.*
holy Reſt of the Sabbath-day, do know that it frees the Soul, and makes it vacant from earthly things for this Purpoſe, that it may fully apply itſelf to the Worſhip and Contemplation of God, and Converſe with him at greater length. Then certainly where there is this entire Love to God, this will not weigh heavy, will be no grievous Task to it, it will embrace

embrace and gladly obey this Commandment, not only as its Duty, but as its great Delight; for there is nothing that Love rejoices in more, than in the Converſe and Society of thoſe on whom it is placed, would willingly beſtow moſt of its time that Way, and thinks all Hours too ſhort that are ſpent in that Society. Therefore not only they that profanely break, but they that keep it heavily and wearily, that find it rather a Burthen than a Delight, may juſtly ſuſpect that the Love of God is not in them; but he that keeps his Day chearfully, and loves it, becauſe on it he may more liberally ſolace and refreſh himſelf in God, may ſafely take it as an Evidence of his Love to God.

Now that after the ſame Manner the Love of our Neighbour is the Sum of the ſecond Table, the Apoſtle St. *Paul* proves it for us clearly and briefly, *Rom.* xiii. 9, 10. All the Commandments touching our Neighbour are for guarding him from Evil and Injury. Now *Love worketh no ill to his Neighbour, therefore is the fulfilling of the Law.* He that truly loves his Neighbour as himſelf, will be as loth to wrong him as to wrong himſelf, either in that Honour and Reſpect that is due to him, or in his Life or Chaſtity, or Goods or good Name, or to lodge ſo much as an unjuſt Deſire or Thought, becauſe that is the Beginning and Conception of real Injury. In a Word, the great Diſorder and Crookedneſs of the corrupt Heart of Man, conſiſts in Self-love; it is the very Root of all Sin both againſt God and Man; for no Man commits any Offence, but it is ſome way to profit or pleaſe himſelf. It was a high Enormity of Self-love, that brought forth the very firſt Sin of Mankind; that was the Bait that took more than either the Colour or Taſte of the Apple, that it was deſirable for Knowledge; it was in that that the main Strength of the Temptation lay, *ye*

ſhall

ſhall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil. And was it not deep Self-love to affect that? And it is ſtill thus, though we feel the miſerable Fruits of that Tree: the ſame Self-love poſſeſſes us ſtill, that to pleaſe our own Humour and Luſts, our Pride, or Covetouſneſs, or Voluptuouſneſs, we break the Law of God, the Law of Piety, and of Equity and Charity to Men. Therefore the Apoſtle, foretelling the Iniquities and Impieties of the laſt times, *Covetous, Boaſters*, &c. and *Lovers of Pleaſures, more than Lovers of God*; he ſets that on the Front, as the chief leading Evil, and the Source of all the reſt, Lovers of their ownſelves: Men ſhall be Lovers of themſelves, therefore *covetous*; and *Lovers of themſelves more than Lovers of God*, becauſe *Lovers of their ownſelves*, 2 Tim. iii. 2. Therefore this is the Sum of that which God requires in his holy Law, the reforming of our Love, which is the commanding Paſſion of the Soul, and wheels all the reſt about with it in Good or Evil.

And its Reformation is in this, recalling it from ourſelves unto God, and reflecting it from God to our Brethren; loving ourſelves ſovereignly by corrupt Nature, we are Enemies to God, and Haters of him, and cannot love our Neighbours but only in Reference to ourſelves, and ſo far as it profits or pleaſeth us do ſo, and not in Order and Reſpect unto God: The higheſt and the true Redreſs of this Diſorder, is that which we have here in theſe two Precepts as the Subſtance of all; firſt that all our Love aſcend to God, and then what is due to Men deſcend from thence, and ſo paſſing that Way it is purified and refined, and is ſubordinate and conformed to our Love of him above all, which is the firſt and great Commandment.

Here we have the ſupream Object of Love, to whom it is due, *the Lord thy God*, and the Meaſure

of it, which is indeed to know no Meaſure *, *with all thy Heart, all thy Soul, and all thy Mind*, (for which in *Deut. thy Strength*,) *Luke* hath both; the Difference is none, for all mean that the Soul, and all the Powers of it, unite and combine themſelves in their moſt intenſe and higheſt Strength to the Love of God, and that all the Workings of the Soul, and Actions of the whole Man be no other, but the Acting and Exerciſe of this Love.

He accounts nor accepts of nothing we can offer him, if we give not the Heart with it; and he will have none of that neither, unleſs he have it all: And it is a poor All when we have given it, for the great God to accept of. If one of us had the Affection of a hundred, yea of all the Men in the World, yet could he not love God anſwerable to his full Worth and Goodneſs: All the glorified Spirits, Angels, and Men, that are or ſhall be in their Perfections, loving him with the utmoſt Extent of their Souls, do not altogether make up ſo much Love as he deſerves, yet he is pleaſed to require our Heart, and the Love we have to beſtow on him; and though it is infinitely due of Debt, yet he will take it as a Gift, *My Son, give me thy Heart.*

Therefore the Soul that begins to offer itſelf to him, although over-whelmed with the Senſe of its own Unworthineſs, and the Meanneſs of its Love, yet may ſay, " Lord, I am aſhamed of this Gift I " bring thee, yet becauſe thou calleſt for it, ſuch as " it is, here it is, the Heart and all the Love I have, " I offer unto thee; and had I ten thouſand times " more, it ſhould all be thine; as much as I can I " love thee, and I deſire to be able to love thee " more; although I am unworthy to be admitted to " love, yet thou art moſt worthy to be loved by me, " and

* *Modus eſt neſcire modum, ſubtiliùs iſta diſtinguere facile eſt magis quàm ſolidum.*

" and beſides thou doſt allow, yea commandeſt me " to love thee; my loving of thee adds nothing to " thee, but it makes me happy; and though it be " true, the Love and Heart I offer thee is infinitely " too little for thee, yet there is nothing beſides " thee enough for it."

The Lord, or Jehovah, thy God.] There ly the two great Reaſons of Love, τὸ ἀγαπητὸν and τὸ ἰσχὺν, *Jehovah* the Spring of Being and Goodneſs, infinitely lovely. All the Beauty and Excellencies of the Creatures are but a Drop of that Ocean. And *thy God*, to all of us the Author of our Life, and of all that we enjoy, that ſpread forth thoſe Heavens that roll about us, and comfort us with their Light and Motions, and Influences; and eſtabliſhed this Earth that ſuſtains us; that furniſheth us with Food and Raiment, and in a Word (and it is the Apoſtle's) that gives us, ζωὴν καὶ πνοὴν καὶ πάντα, *Life, and Breath, and all Things*; and to the Believer, his God in a nearer Propriety, by Redemption and peculiar Covenant. But our Miſery is, the moſt of us do not ſtudy and conſider him, what he is in himſelf and to us, and therefore do not love him, becauſe we know him not.

And thy Neighbour as thyſelf.] If we will not confeſs nor ſuſpect ourſelves, how much we are wanting in the former, yet our manifeſt Defect in this will diſcover it, therefore the Apoſtle, *Rom.* xiii. and *Gal.* v. ſpeaks of this as all, becauſe though inferior to the other, yet connected with it, and the ſureſt Sign of it. For theſe live and dy together. The Apoſtle St. *John* is expreſs in it, and gives thoſe Hypocrites the Lie plainly. *If any Man* (ſays he) *loves God, and hates his Brother, he is a Liar*, &c. We have no real Way of expreſſing our Love to God, but in our Converſe with Men, and in the Works of Love towards them.

Certainly that ſweet Affection of Love to God, cannot conſiſt with Malice and Bitterneſs of Spirit againſt our Brethren. No, it ſweetens and calms the Soul, and makes it all Love every way.

As thyſelf.] As truly both wiſhing, and to thy Power procuring his Good, as thy own. Conſider how much unwilling thou art to be injured or defamed, and have the ſame Thoughts for thy Brother, be as tender for him. But how few of us aſpire to this Degree of Charity?

Thy very Enemies are not here excluded; if Self-love be ſtill predominant in thee inſtead of the Love of God, then thou wilt make thine own Intereſt the Rule of thy Love; ſo when thou art, or conceiveſt thou art wronged by any, the Reaſon of thy Love ceaſeth; but if thou love for God, that Reaſon abides ſtill *: "God hath commanded me to love my "Enemies, and he gives me his Example, he does "Good to the wicked that offend him".

And this is indeed a Trial of our Love to God: One hath marred thee, that gives thee to think that thou haſt no Cauſe to love him for thyſelf; be it ſo, Self-love forbids thee, but the Love of God commands thee to love him. God ſays, "If thou loveſt "me, love him for my ſake." And if thy Love to God be ſincere, thou wilt be glad of the Occaſion to give ſo good a Teſtimony of it, and find a Pleaſure in that which others account ſo difficult and painful.

* *Amicus diligendus in Deo, & inimicus propter Deum*, Aug.

A DISCOURSE ON

HEBREWS VIII. 10.

For this is the Covenant that I will make with the Houſe of Iſrael *after thoſe Days, ſaith the Lord; I will put my Laws into their Mind, and write them in their Hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a People.*

THE two great Evils that perplex ſenſible Minds, are the Guiltineſs of Sin, and the Power of it; therefore this new Covenant hath in it two Promiſes oppoſite to theſe two Evils, free Pardon to remove the Guilt of Sin, and the ſubduing of its Power by the Law of God written in the Heart. Of this latter only for the preſent. Having ſpoke ſomewhat of the Senſe of the Law in ten Commandments, and of the Sum of it in two, this remains to be conſidered as altogether neceſſary for Obedience, and without which all hearing and ſpeaking, and all the Knowledge of it, will be fruitleſs; though it be made very clear and legible without, we ſhall only read it, and not at all keep it, unleſs it be likewiſe written within.

Obſerve, 1. The Agreement of the Law with the Goſpel: The Goſpel bears the compleat fulfilling of the Law, and ſatisfying its higheſt Exactneſs in our Surety Jeſus Chriſt, ſo that way nothing is abated; but, beſides in reference to us ourſelves, though it take off the Rigour of it from us, becauſe anſwered by

by another for us, yet it doth not aboliſh the Rule of the Law, but eſtabliſheth it. It is ſo far from tearing or blotting out the outward Copies of it, that it writes it anew, where it was not before, even within, ſets it upon the Heart in ſure and deep Characters. We ſee this Kind of writing of the Law is a Promiſe for the Days of the Goſpel, cited out of the Prophet *Jeremy*, &c.

There is indeed no ſuch writing of the Law in us, or keeping of it by us, as will hold good for our Juſtification in the Sight of God, therefore that other Promiſe runs combined with it, the free Forgiveneſs of Iniquity. But again, there is no ſuch Forgiveneſs as ſets a Man free to Licentiouſneſs and Contempt of God's Law, but on the contrary binds him more ſtrongly to Obedience; therefore to that ſweet Promiſe of the Pardon of Sin, is inſeparably joined this other of inward writing of the Law. The Heart is not waſh'd from the Guiltineſs of Sin in the Blood of Chriſt, that it may wallow and defile itſelf again in the ſame Puddle, but it is therefore waſh'd that the Tables or Leaves of it may be clean, for receiving the pure Characters of that Law of God which is to be written on it.

Concerning this Writing there are three Things you may mark. 1. What it is. 2. What its Neceſſity. 3. Who is its Writer. The writing of the Law in the Heart, is briefly no other but the renewing and ſanctifying of the Heart by the Infuſion of Grace, which is a heavenly Light that gives the Soul to know God aright; and that is added here as the ſame with the Writing of the Law in the Heart, and an Illuſtration of it, *They ſhall all know me from the leaſt of them to the greateſt.* And this Light bringeth Heat with it *. That right Knowledge of God being in the Soul, begets in it Love to him;

* *Lux eſt vehiculum caloris.*

him; and Love is the ſame with the fulfilling of the whole Law: It takes up the whole Soul, *I will put it in their Mind, and write it in their Hearts.* If we will diſtinguiſh thoſe, then it is, they ſhall both know it and love it, it ſhall not be written anew in their Heads, and go no deeper, but written in their Hearts; but we may well take both for the whole Soul, for this kind of Knowledge and Love are inſeparable; and where the one is, the other cannot be wanting.

So then a ſupernatural ſanctified Knowledge of God, is the Law of God written in the Heart; when it comes and entertains him as holy within it, then it hath not a dead Letter of the Law written in it, but νόμον ἔμψυχον, the Law-giver himſelf, his Name and Will is engraven on it throughout, on every part of it, all that they know of God ſhall not be by mere Report, and by the Voice of others, but they ſhall inwardly read and know him within themſelves. Which (by the by) makes not the publick Teaching and Work of the Miniſtry ſuperfluous to any, even to thoſe that know moſt of God, but ſignifies only this, that all they that do indeed receive and believe the Goſpel, are inwardly enlightened by the Spirit of God to underſtand the Things of God, and have not their Knowledge on bare Truſt of others that inſtruct them, without any particular Perſuaſion and Light within; but what they hear of ſpiritual Things, they ſhall underſtand and know after a ſpiritual Manner. And the Univerſality of the Promiſe ſignifies, that this kind of Knowledge ſhould be more frequently and more largely beſtowed in the Days of the Goſpel, than it was before.

2. The Neceſſity of writing the Law on the Heart. Although there be in the natural Conſcience of Man ſome dim Character of the Law, convincing him of groſ- *A naturæ humanæ corruptela.*

ſer

ſer Wickedneſſes, and leaving him inexcuſable, of which the Apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* ii. 15. yet he is ſo far naturally from the right Knowledge of God, and the Love of his whole Law, that, inſtead of that Knowledge, his Mind is full of Darkneſs, *Eph.* iv. 18. and contrary to that Love, his Heart is poſſeſt with a natural Enmity and Antipathy againſt the Law of God, *Rom.* viii. 7. There is a Law within him directly oppoſite, which the Apoſtle calls the *Law of Sin*, Rom. vii. 23. Sin ruling and commanding the Heart and whole Man, making Laws at its Pleaſure †, and obtaining full Obedience. Therefore of Neceſſity, before a Man can be brought to obey the holy Law of God, the inward Frame of his Heart muſt be changed, the corrupt Law of Sin muſt be abrogate, *Rom.* vi. and the Soul renounce Obedience to it, and give itſelf up wholly, εἰς τὸν τύπον to receive the Stamp and Impreſſion of the Law of God; and then having it written within upon his Heart, his Actions will bear the Reſemblance, and be conform unto it.

A natura obedientiæ.

In this Promiſe that God makes to his People, he hath Regard to the Nature of that Obedience that he requires, becauſe he will have it ſincere and cordial, therefore he puts a living Principle of it within, writes his Law in the Heart, and then it is in the Words and Actions derived from thence, and is more in the Heart than in them: The firſt Copy is in the Heart, and all the other Powers and Parts of a Man follow that, and ſo by that means, as it is ſincere, ſo it is univerſal. The Heart is that which commands all the reſt: And as the vital Spirits flow from it to the whole Body; thus the Law of God, being written in it, is diffuſed through the whole Man: It might be in the Memory

† *Tolerabis iniquas interiùs leges.* Claud.

mory or in the Tongue, and not in the reſt; but put it in the Heart, and then it is undoubtedly in all.

Being written in the Heart, makes the Obedience likewiſe univerſal in the Object (as they ſpeak) to the whole Law of God. When it is written only without a Man, he may read one Part and paſs over another, may poſſibly chuſe to conform to ſome Part of the Law, and leave the reſt; but when the full Copy of it is written in his Heart, then it is all one Law: And as in itſelf it is inſeparable, as St. *James* teacheth us, ſo it is likewiſe in his Eſteem and Affection and Endeavour of Obedience; he hath Regard unto all the Commandments as one, becauſe of his Love to the Law of God, he hates not only ſome, but every falſe Way, as *David* ſpeaks. He that looks on the Law without him, will poſſibly forbear to break it while others look upon him, his Obedience lies much in the Beholder's Eye; but he that hath the Law written within, cannot chuſe but regard it as much in ſecret as in publick, although his Sin might be hid from the Knowledge and Cenſure of Men, yet ſtill it were Violence done to that pure Law that is within his Breaſt, and therefore he hates it alike, as if it were publick. This is the conſtant Enemy of all Sin, this Law within him, *I have hid thy Law in my Heart*, ſays *David*, *that I might not ſin againſt thee*, and makes a Man abate nothing of his Courſe of Obedience and Holineſs becauſe unſeen, but like the Sun that keeps on its Motion when it is clouded from our Eyes, as well as when we ſee it.

In a Word, this Writing of the Law in the Heart makes Obedience a natural Motion, I mean by a new Nature; it ſprings not from outward Conſtraints and Reſpects, but from an inward Principle, and therefore not only is it univerſal and conſtant, but chearful and eaſy. The Law only written in Tables

of Stone is hard and grievous; but make once the Heart the Table of it, and then there is nothing more pleaſing. This Law of God makes Service delightful, even the painfuleſt of it, *Pſal.* xl. 8. The Sun that moves with ſuch wonderful Swiftneſs, that to the ignorant it would ſeem incredible to hear how many thouſands of Miles it goes each Hour; yet becauſe it is naturally fitted for that Courſe, it comes, as the Pſalmiſt ſpeaks, *like a Bridegroom forth of his Chamber, and rejoices as a ſtrong Man to run a Race.* If the natural Man be convinced of the Goodneſs and Equity of the Law of God, yet becauſe it is not written within, but only commands without, it is a violent Motion to him to obey it, and therefore he finds it a painful Yoke. But hear *David*, in whoſe Heart it was, ſpeak of it, how often doth he call it his *Delight* and his *Joy?*

If any profane Perſons object to a godly Man his exact Life, that it is too preciſe, as if he writ each Action before he do it; he may anſwer, as *Demoſthenes* to him that objected he wrote his Orations before he ſpake them, That he was not at all aſhamed of that, although they were not only written, but engraven before-hand. Certainly the godly Man lives by this Law that is written and engraven on his Heart, and needs not be aſhamed of it.

It is true, the renewed Man, even he that hath this Law deepeſt written in his Heart, yet while he lives here, is ſtill moleſted with that inbred Antinomian, that Law of Sin that yet dwells in his Fleſh; though the Force and Power of it is broken, and its Laws repealed in his Converſion, and this new pure Law placed in its Stead: Yet becauſe that Part which is Fleſh in him ſtill entertains and harbours it, where it creates and breeds a Chriſtian daily Vexation, becauſe Sin hath loſt Dominion, it is ſtill practiſing Rebellion againſt that ſpiritual Kingdom and Law

that

that is eſtabliſhed in the regenerate Mind: As a Man that hath once been in Poſſeſſion of Rule, though uſurped, yet being ſubdued, he is ſtill *working* in that Kingdom to turbulent Practices. But though by this (as the Apoſtle was, *Rom.* vii. 4.) every godly Man is often driven to ſad Perplexities and Complaints, yet in this is his Comfort, that Law of his God written there hath his Heart and Affection, Sin is dethron'd and thruſt out of his Heart, and hath only an uſurped Abode within him againſt his Will, he ſides with the Law of God, and fights with all his Power for it againſt the other; that holy Law is his Delight, and this Law of Sin his greateſt Grief.

3. *I will write*] The Lord promiſes himſelf to do this, and it is indeed his Prerogative; he wrote it at firſt on Tables of Stone, and this ſpiritual engraving it on the Heart is much more his peculiar. Other Men might afterwards engrave it on Stone, but no Man can at all write it on the Heart, not upon his own, much leſs upon another's. Upon his own he cannot, for it is naturally taken up and poſſeſt with that contrary Law of Sin, (as we ſaid before) and is willingly ſubject to it, loves that Law, and therefore in that Poſture it neither can nor will work this Change upon itſelf, to diſpoſſeſs that Law which it loves, and bring in that which it hates. No Man can write this Law on the Heart of another, for it is inacceſſible, his Hand cannot reach it, he cannot come at it, how then ſhould he write any thing on it? Men in the Miniſtry of the Word can but ſtand and call without, they cannot ſpeak to within, far leſs write any thing within. Though they ſpeak never ſo excellently and ſpiritually, and expreſs no other but what is written on their own Hearts, and certainly that is the moſt powerful way of ſpeaking, and the likelieſt for making Impreſſion on the Heart of another; yet unleſs the Hand of God's own Spi-

rit carry it into the Hearer's Heart, and ſet on the Stamp of it there, it will periſh as a Sound in the Air, and effect nothing. *Sonus verborum noſtrorum aures percutit, magiſter intus. Nolite putare quenquam hominem aliquid diſcere ab alio homine, admonere poſſumus per ſtrepitum vocis noſtræ, ſi non eſt intus qui doceat, inanis ſtrepitus eſt noſter.* Aug. *in* 1 *Jo. Tr.* 3. Let this ever be acknowledged to his Glory; the Voice of Men may beat the Ear, but only he that made the Heart can work upon it, and change and mould it as it pleaſeth him: This is his own Promiſe, and he alone makes it good. He writes his Law on the Hearts of his Children, and by this Work of his Grace prepares them for Glory; they that have this Law written in their Hearts, their Names are certainly written in the Book of Life.

A

Short Catechiſm.

Queſtion. WHat is naturally every Man's chief Deſire?

Anſwer. To be happy.

Q. Which is the Way to true Happineſs?

A. True Religion.

Q. What is true Religion?

A. The true and lively Knowledge of the only true God, and of him whom he hath ſent, Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. Whence is this Knowledge to be learned?

A. All the Works of God declare his Being, and his Glory; but the clearer Knowledge of himſelf, and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, is to be learned from his own Word, contained in the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Teſtament.

Q. What do thoſe Scriptures teach us concerning God?

A. That he is one Infinite, Eternal Spirit, moſt Wiſe, and Holy, and Juſt, and Merciful, and the All-powerful Maker and Ruler of the World.

Q. What do they further teach us concerning him?

A. That he is Three in One, and One in Three, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt.

Q. What will that lively Knowledge of God effectually work in us?

A. It will cauſe us to believe in him, and to love him above all Things, even above ourſelves, to adore

dore and worſhip him, to pray to him, and to praiſe him and exalt him with all our Might, and to yield up ourſelves to the Obedience of all his Commandments, as having both made us, and made himſelf known to us for that very End.

Rehearſe then the Articles of our Belief.

I believe in God the Father, *&c.*

Rehearſe the Ten Commandments of the Law, which are the Rule of our Obedience, and ſo the Trial of our Love.

A. God ſpake theſe Words, I am the Lord thy God, *&c.*

Q. What is the Summary our Saviour hath given us of this Law?

A. Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind, and thy Neighbour as thyſelf.

Q. What is the effectual Means of obtaining Increaſe of Faith and Power to obey, and generally all Graces and Bleſſings at the Hand of God?

A. Prayer.

Rehearſe that moſt excellent and perfect Prayer that our Saviour hath taught us.

A. Our Father which art in Heaven, *&c.*

Q. In what Eſtate was Man created?

A. After the Image of God in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs.

Q. Did he continue in that Eſtate?

A. No. But by breaking the Commandment which his Maker gave him, eating of the Fruit of that Tree which was forbidden him, he made himſelf and his whole Poſterity ſubject to Sin and Death.

Q. Hath God left Man in this Miſery, without all Means and Hopes of Recovery?

A. No. For he ſo loved the World that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth on him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.

Q. What

Q. What is then the great Doctrine of the Goſpel?

A. That ſame coming of the Son of God in the Fleſh, and giving himſelf to the Death of the Croſs to take away the Sin of the World, and his riſing again from the Dead, and aſcending into Glory.

Q. What doth that Goſpel mainly teach and really perſuade all the Followers of it to do?

A. It teacheth them to deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, and to live ſoberly and righteouſly and godly in this preſent World.

Q. How hath our Lord Jeſus himſelf expreſſed the great and neceſſary Duty of all his Diſciples?

A. That they deny themſelves, and take up their Croſs and follow him.

Q. Rehearſe then ſome of the chief Points wherein we are to follow our Lord Jeſus Chriſt?

A. 1. To ſurrender ourſelves wholly to our heavenly Father, and his good Pleaſure in all Things, even in the ſharpeſt Afflictions and Sufferings; and not at all to do our own Will, or deſign our own Praiſe or Advantage, but in all Things to do his Will and intend his Glory.

2. To be ſpotleſs, and chaſte, and holy, in our whole Converſation.

3. Add a third. To be meek and lowly, not to ſlander or reproach, to mock or deſpiſe any; and if any do ſo to us, to bear it patiently, yea to rejoice in it.

4. A fourth. Unfeignedly to love our Chriſtian Brethren, and to be charitably and kindly affected toward all Men, even to our Enemies, forgiving them, yea and praying for them, and returning them Good for Evil; to comfort the Afflicted, and relieve the Poor, and to do good for all as we are able.

Q. Is

Q. Is it neceſſary that all Chriſtians live according to theſe Rules?

A. So abſolutely neceſſary, that they that do not ſo in ſome good meaſure, whatſoever they profeſs, do not really believe in Jeſus Chriſt, nor have any Portion in him.

Q. What viſible Seals hath our Saviour annexed to that Goſpel, to confirm our Faith, and to convey the Grace of it to us?

A. The two Sacraments of the New Teſtament, Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper.

Q. What doth Baptiſm ſignify and ſeal?

A. Our waſhing from Sin, and our new Birth in Jeſus Chriſt.

Q. What doth the Lord's Supper ſignify and ſeal?

A. Our ſpiritual Nouriſhment and Growth in *him*, and transforming us more and more into his Likeneſs, by commemorating his Death, and feeding on his Body and Blood, under the Figures of Bread and Wine.

Q. What is required to make fit and worthy Communicants of the Lord's Supper?

A. Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and Repentance towards God, and Charity towards all Men.

Q. What is Faith in our Lord Jeſus?

A. It is the Grace by which we both believe his whole Doctrine, and truſt in him as the Redeemer and Saviour of the World, and entirely deliver up ourſelves to him, to be taught and ſaved and ruled by him, as our Prophet, Prieſt, and King.

Q. What is Repentance?

A. It is a godly Sorrow for Sin, and a hearty and real turning from all Sin unto God.

Q. What is the final Portion of unbelieving and unrepentant Sinners?

A. The everlaſting Torments of Devils.

Q. What

Q. What is the final Portion of them that truly repent and believe, and obey the Goſpel?

A. The bleſſed Life of Angels, in the Viſion of God for ever.

A Queſtion for young Perſons before their firſt Admiſſion to the Lord's Supper.

Q. Whereas you were in your Infancy baptized into the Name of Jeſus Chriſt, do you now upon diſtinct Knowledge, and with firm Belief and pious Affection, own that Chriſtian Faith of which you have given an Account, and withal your Baptiſmal Vow of renouncing the Service of Satan, and the World, and the Luſts of the Fleſh, and of devoting yourſelf to God in all Holineſs of Life?

A. I do ſincerely and heartily declare my Belief of that Faith, and own my Engagement to that holy Vow, and reſolve, by the Aſſiſtance of God's Grace, to continue in the careful Obſervance of it all my Days.

Ten Sermons, never before publiſhed.

SERMON I.

ROMANS XIII. 11, 12, 13, 14.

And that, knowing the Time, that now it is high Time to awake out of Sleep; for now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed.

The Night is far ſpent, the Day is at hand: let us therefore caſt off the Works of Darkneſs, and let us put on the Armour of Light.

Let us walk honeſtly as in the Day; not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs, not in Chambering and Wantonneſs, not in Striſe and Envying.

But put ye on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and make not Proviſion for the Fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof.

THE higheſt Beauty of the Soul, the very Image of God upon it, is Holineſs: He that is aſpiring to it himſelf, is upon a moſt excellent Deſign; and if he can do any thing to excite, and call up others to it, performs a Work of the greateſt Charity.

This *Paul* doth frequently and preſſingly in his Writings. This Epiſtle, as it doth admirably clear the Doctrine of *Juſtification*, it doth no leſs earneſtly urge the Doctrine of *Sanctification*: That one Sentence about the Middle thereof does excellently unite them; and ſo is the Summary of all that goes before, and all that follows, (*There is therefore now no Condemnation*, &c. *Chap.* viii. 1.)

The

The preſent Words are as an Alarm, or Morning Watch Bell, of ſingular Uſe, not only awaking a Chriſtian to his Day's Work, but withal minding him what it is; and theſe two ſhall be all our Diviſion of them. 1*ſt*, Our *Awaking* ſounded. 2. Our *Walking* directed. The former, *Ver.* 11, 12. tells us, it is Time to riſe, and calls us up to put on our Cloaths, and, being Soldiers, our Arms. The latter, *Ver.* 13. directeth our Behaviour and Employment throughout the Day. The laſt Verſe doth ſhortly, and that fully and clearly, fold up both together. We ſhall take the Words juſt as they ly.

And that knowing the Time.] This imports much in all Actions, and here it is the Apoſtle's great Argument: Now it is unfit to ſleep, *knowing the Time*; however it might have been before, now it is very unſeaſonable and unſuitable, that you ly ſnorting as at Midnight. Do you know what o'Clock it is? (ὥρα) It is Time to riſe; it is Morning, the Day begins to appear. καιρὸν.

Obſervation. All the Days of ſinful Nature are dark Night, in which there is no right diſcerning of ſpiritual Things: Some Light there is of Reaſon, to direct natural and civil Actions, but no Day-light till the Sun ariſe. 'Tis Night ſtill for all the Stars, and the Moon to help them: Notwithſtanding natural Speculations, that are more remote, and all Prudence and Policy for Affairs, that come ſomewhat nearer to Action, yet we are ſtill in the Night, and you do think that a ſad Life; but, the Truth is, we ſleep on in it, and our Heads are ſtill full of new Dreams that keep us ſleeping. We are conſtantly drunk with Cares or Deſires of Senſe, and ſo our Sleep continues. Sometimes it is called *Death*, *dead in Sins*, &c. Now, Sleep is Brother to Death; and ſo by it not unfitly is the ſame State reſembled: No ſpiritual Life we have at all, and therefore in

that Senſe are truly dead. But becauſe there is in us a natural Life, and in that a Capacity of ſpiritual Life, therefore we are ſaid to be aſleep. As in a dead Sleep, our Soul is bound up and drowned in Fleſh, a Surcharge of the Vapours of groſs ſenſible Things that we glut ourſelves withal, and the Condition of our wiſeſt Thoughts, in relation to our higheſt Good, are nothing but Dreams and Raveries. Your Projectings, and Bargainings, and Buildings, theſe be a better Sort of Dreams; but your Envyings, and mutual Deſpiſings and Diſcontents, your detracting and evil-ſpeaking, theſe are more impertinent, and to yourſelves more perplexing: And your ſweeteſt Enjoyments in this Life, that you think moſt real, are but Shadows of Delight, a more pleaſant ſort of Dreams. All Pomps and royal Solemnities, the Scripture calls φαντασίας. *Act.* xxv. 23. A Man will not readily think ſo, while he is in them, *Somnium narrare vigilantis eſt*; we do not perceive the Vanity of our Dreams, and know that they are ſo, and declare them to be ſo, till we be awaked. Sometimes in a Dream a Man will have ſuch a Thought that it is but a Dream, yet doth he not throughly ſee the Folly thereof, but goes on in it. Some natural Men have ſometimes a Glance of ſuch Thoughts, that all theſe Things he is either turmoiling or delighting in are Vanity, and nothing to the Purpoſe, yet he awakes not, but raves on ſtill in them; he ſhifts a little, turns on his Bed as a Door on its Hinges, but turns not off, does not riſe.

But the ſpiritual-minded Chriſtian, that is indeed awake, and looks back on his former Thoughts and Ways, O how does he diſdain himſelf, and all his former high Fancies that he was moſt pleaſed with, finding them Dreams! O what a Fool, what a Wretch was I, while my Head was full of ſuch Stuff, building Caſtles in the Air, imagining and catching at ſuch Gains,

Gains, and ſuch Preferments, and Pleaſures, and either they ſtill running before me, and I could not overtake them, or if I thought I did, what have I now, when I ſee what it is, and find that I have embraced a Shadow, falſe Hopes, and Fears, and Joys? *He thinks he hath eat, and his Soul is empty*, Iſa. xxix. And you that will ſleep on, may; but ſure I am, when you come to your Death-bed, if poſſibly you awake then, then ſhall you look back, with ſad Regret, upon whatſoever you moſt eſteemed, and gloried in, under the Sun. While they are coming towards you, they have ſome Shew; but, as a Dream that is paſt, when theſe gay Things are flown by, then we ſee how vain they are.

As that luxurious King cauſed paint on his Tomb two Fingers, as ſounding one upon another, with that Word, *All is not worth ſo much*, *Non tanti eſt*. I know not how Men make a ſhift to ſatisfy themſelves; but, take a ſober and awakened Chriſtian, and ſet him in the Midſt of the beſt of all Things that are here, his Heart would burſt with Deſpair of Satisfaction, were it not for a Hope that he hath, beyond all that this poor World either attains, or is ſeeking after; and that Hope is indeed the Dawning of the Day that is here ſpoken of.

It is Time to awake, ſays he, *Salvation is nearer than when ye believed*. That bright Day you look for is haſting forward; it is nearer than when you began to believe; the Night is far ſpent, the groſs Darkneſs is already paſt, ſome Day-light it is, and is every Moment growing, and the perfect full Morning-light of it is very near.

Obſ. Grace, and the Goſpel that works it, compared with the dark Night of Nature, is the Day, and it is often ſo called: The Apoſtle here calls it ſo, *Let us walk honeſtly as in the Day*. But yet that ſame Light of the Goſpel ſhining to us in the Word,

and

and within us by the Spirit, is but the Appearance or Approaching of the Day, a certain Pledge of it, yea, a kind of Beginning of it, telling us that it is hard at hand. It is one and the ſame Light, and where it enters into any Soul, it makes ſure that eternal full Day to it, that it ſhall not be diſappointed of, more than the Day can go back, and the Sun fail to riſe when the Dawning is begun: And this begun Light is ſtill growing clearer, and tending to the perfect Day, *Prov.* iv. 18. And at the firſt Peep or Appearance of it, ſo much it is, that the Soul is called to awake and ariſe, and put on Day-Cloaths, and apply itſelf to the Actions of the Day; and that is the Thing the Apoſtle here preſſes by it.

O the bleſſed Goſpel, revealing God in Chriſt, and calling up Sinners to Communion with him, diſpelling that black Night of Ignorance and accurſed Darkneſs that otherwiſe had never ended, but paſſed on to an endleſs Night of eternal Miſery! Says not *Zacharias* with good Reaſon in his Song, *Luke* i. that it was *through the tender Mercy of God that this Day-ſpring from on high did viſit us?*

Now, ſays the Apoſtle, *this Day appearing, it is Time to awake*; and the longer ſince it began to appear, and the clearer the Light grows, the more high Time is it to awake and riſe, and caſt off Night-cloaths and Night-works, *Works of Darkneſs*, and to put on Garments, yea, *Armour of Light*. He that is a Soldier, his Garments are not on, till his Arms be on, and his Sword about him, then he is ready; eſpecially in a Time and Poſture of War, and the Enemy lying nigh, even round about him; and this is every Chriſtian's State while he is here. An *Armour of Light*, not only ſtrong and uſeful, but comely and graceful, fit to walk abroad in; bright ſhining Armour; as your old Poets deſcribe their Champions, dazling their Enemies Eyes.

And

And thus apparelled, to behave ourſelves ſuitably, to *walk honeſtly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs:* That is a Night-work, as the Apoſtle hath it, 1 *Theſ.* v. To ſtagger and reel in the Streets in Day-light, to be drunk in the Morning, is moſt ſhameful, ſo is that Spirit of Drunkenneſs as unbeſeeming a Chriſtian; to ſee them hurrying and juſtling one another, as drunk with Love of earthly Things, and their Spirits by that beſotted, and unfitted for ſpiritual Things, that they find no Pleaſure in them.

Chambering and Wantonneſs.] All impure laſcivious Converſation, how vile are theſe, and unfit for the Light: Even Nature is aſhamed to be ſeen in theſe Things, in the natural Light of the Day; much more will Grace in the ſpiritual Light of the Goſpel.

Strife and Envy.] As Shuffles and hot Quarrels are moſt of all unſeemly in the Streets in Day-light, ſo the Quarrels and Jarrings of Chriſtians are very ſhameful before the Light wherein they walk. The Goſpel of Chriſt, the grand Doctrine thereof, is Meekneſs and Love. But, O where are they, theſe Graces that ſo abound in the Doctrine of Chriſtianity, and yet are ſo ſcarce in the Lives of Chriſtians? Where are they that look gladly on the Good of others, and bear Evils and Injuries from their Neighbours patiently, and repay Evil with Good? Thus it ought to be; but, on the contrary, how ready are the moſt to part on the leaſt Occaſions, to bite and ſnarl at each other? more ſtill of the Spirit of the Dragon than of the Dove. My Brethren, remember and conſider that the Goſpel Light ſhines amongſt us, and that more clearly than in former Times, and more clearly than to moſt People in the World in theſe Times, and do not outface and affront the bleſſed Light with the accurſed Works of Dark-

Darkneſs; you might have been profane in former Times, or in ſome other Place, at a cheaper Rate.

Know, that if this glorious Light do not break off your Courſe of Sin, it will increaſe your Load of Judgment; the heavieſt of all Condemnations, is to live in Darkneſs, and to live and dy in it, in the Midſt of Light. Amongſt all your deſperate accurſed Wiſhes, this ſhall be one, and a chief one, that either the Son of God had never come into the World, or that you had never heard of him.

Much of that we aim at were gained, if Chriſtians could be brought to conſider who they are, and walk like themſelves, it would raiſe them above the baſe Pleaſures of Sin, and Snares of the World. *The Way of Life is on high to the juſt:* There is a holy Loftineſs, a Diſdain of all impure ſordid Ways. It is ſaid of *Jehoſhaphat*, that *his Heart was liſt up in the Ways of the Lord*, 2 Chron. xvii. 5. As a vain ſelf-conceited Lifting up of the Heart is the great Enemy of our Welfare, as it is written of another, even of a good King, (*Hezekiah*) that *his Heart was liſt up, therefore was Wrath upon him*; ſo there is a happy Exaltation of the Heart, where it is raiſed in God, to deſpiſe all Communion with the Unholy, and unholy Ways of the World. This, my Brethren, is that I would, were wrought in you by the Conſideration of our holy Calling. We are called to Holineſs, and not to Uncleanneſs. *Ye are the Children of the Light and of the Day:* Baſe Night Ways, ſuch as cannot endure the Light, do not become you. O that Comelineſs, that the Saints ſhould ſtudy, that *Decorum* they ſhould keep in all their Ways, εὐσχημόνως, one Action like another, and all like Chriſt, living as in the Light. They that converſe with the beſt Company, ſuch Perſons are obliged to more Decency in Apparel. We live in the Light, in the Company of Angels, of God, and Jeſus Chriſt; and

and therefore ſhould not act any thing that is low or mean, unbeſeeming the Rank we keep, and the Preſence of thoſe we frequent. When the King paſſes through the Country in Progreſs, they that ſee him ſeldom, being either to attend him in his Way, or to receive him into their Houſes, will labour to have all Things in the beſt Order they can for the Time; but they that live at Court, and are daily in the King's Preſence, are conſtantly Court-like in their Habit and Carriage, and all about them. O *Followers of the Lamb*, let your *Garments* be always *white*, yea, let him be your Garment; cloath yourſelves with himſelf; have your Robes made of his ſpotleſs Fleece.

Ver. 11. *Put on the Lord Jeſus.*] No Reſemblance is more uſual than that of Peoples Cuſtoms to their Cloaths, their Habitudes to their Habits: This the Apoſtle uſed in the foregoing Words, *Put on the* [Furniture, or] *Armour of Light*, having caſt off the *Works*, as Cloaths of Darkneſs, Night-cloaths; and the Word, *walking decently*, has ſomething of the ſame Reſemblance contained in it: And here we have the proper Beauty and Ornament of Chriſtians, even the Lord Jeſus, recommended to them under the ſame Notion, *Put on*, &c. Him we put on by Faith, and are cloathed with him as our Righteouſneſs. We come unto our Father, in our elder Brother's perfumed Garments, and ſo obtain the Bleſſing, which he, in a manner, was ſtripped of for our Sakes, did undergo the Curſe, and was made a Curſe for our Sakes: So the Apoſtle ſpeaks of him; we *put him on*, as *The Lord our Righteouſneſs*, and are made *the Righteouſneſs of God in him.* This Inveſtiture is firſt, when our Perſons are made acceptable, and we come into Court. But there is another *putting of him on*, in the Conformity of Holineſs, which always accompanies the former, and that is it which

is here meant. And this I declare unto you, that whoſoever does not thus *put him on*, ſhall find themſelves deceived in the other, if they imagine it belongs to them.

They that are the Sons of God, and have the Hope of inheriting with him, do really become like him, even Heirs in ſome Degree, 1 *Joh.* iii. 3. and that bleſſed Expectation we have, is to be fully *like him: When he appears, we ſhall be like him*, ſaith the Apoſtle; and in the mean while are endeavouring to be ſo, and ſomewhat *attaining it*, as he adds, *Every one that hath this Hope, purifieth himſelf, as he is pure.* He is the only begotten Son; and we are ſo reſtored in him to the Dignity of Sons, that withal we are really changed into his Likeneſs: He is the *Image of the Father* that is renewed upon us.

It is the Subſtance of Religion, to be like him whom we worſhip *. Man's End and Perfection is *Likeneſs to God.* But, Oh! the Diſtance, the Unlikeneſs, yea, the Contrariety, that is fallen upon our Nature; *the carnal Mind is Enmity to God*, the Soul, as it were, become Fleſh, and ſo moſt unſuitable to the Father of Spirits, it is become like the Beaſt that periſhes. Now, to repair and raiſe us, this was the Courſe taken: We could not riſe up to God; he came down to us, yea, unto us, to raiſe and draw us up again to him. He became like us, that we might become like him. God firſt put on Man, that Man might put on God. Putting on the Lord Jeſus, we put on Man, but that Man is God; and ſo, in putting on Man, we put on God. Thus, putting on Chriſt, we put on all Grace: This, not only by ſtudying him as our Copy and Example, but by real Participation of his Spirit; and that ſo as that daily the Likeneſs is growing, while we are carried by that Spirit to ſtudy his Example, and enabled in ſome

Pythagoras.

* *Summa religionis imitari quem colis.*

ſome meaſure to conform to it; ſo that theſe two go together, *growing in Grace*, and in *the Knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt. He is the *Armour of Light* before ſpoken of; all our Ornament and Safety is in him. Some Pictures of great Perſons you have ſeen, with Arms and Robes on at once; thus we, when cloathed with Chriſt, have our Arms and Robes both on at once, yea, both in one, for he is both. So this is the great Study of a Chriſtian, to eye and read Chriſt much, and, by looking on him, to become more and more like him, making the Impreſſion deeper by each Day's Meditation, and beholding of him; his Spirit in us, and that Love his Spirit works, making the Work eaſy, as Sympathies do: And ſtill the more the Change is wrought, it becomes ſtill the more eaſy to work it; this is excellently deſcribed by this Apoſtle, 2 *Cor.* iii. 18.

Now we ſee our Buſineſs: O that we had Hearts to it! 'Tis high, 'tis ſweet, to be growing more and more Chriſt-like every Day. What is the Purchaſe or Conqueſt of Kingdoms to this? O! what are we doing, that mind not this more, even they whoſe proper Work it is? How remiſs are they in it, and what ſmall Progreſs do they make? Are we leſs for the World and ourſelves, and more for God this Year than the former, more meek and gentle, abler to bear Wrongs, and do Good for them, more holy and ſpiritual in our Thoughts and Ways, more abundant and fervent in Prayer? I know there will be Times of Deadneſs and Winter Seaſons, even in the Souls of living Chriſtians; but it is not always ſo, it will come about yet: So that, take the whole Courſe of a Chriſtian together, he is advancing, putting on ſtill more of Chriſt, and living in him. There is a cloſer Union betwixt the Soul and this its ſpiritual Cloathing, than betwixt the Body and its Gar-

ments; that doth import a Tranſchange into Chriſt, put on as a new Life, or new Self. The Chriſtian by Faith doth this, he puts off himſelf, old carnal Self, and inſtead thereof puts on Jeſus Chriſt, and thence forward hath no more Regard of that old Self, than of old caſt Cloaths, but is all for Chriſt, joys in nothing elſe. This is a Myſtery which cannot be underſtood but by partaking of it.

My Brethren, Learn to have theſe Thoughts frequent and occurrent with you on all Occaſions. Think, when about any thing, how would Chriſt behave himſelf in this, even ſo let me endeavour.

You will poſſibly ſay, They that ſpeak thus, and adviſe us, do not do thus. O! that that were not too true; yet there be ſome that are real in it, and although it be but little that is attained, yet the very Aim is excellent, and ſomewhat there is that is done by it. It is better to have ſuch Thoughts and Deſires, than altogether to give it up; and the very Deſire, being ſerious and ſincere, does ſo much change the Habitude and Uſage of the Soul and Life, that it is not to be deſpiſed.

Now follows, *And make no Proviſion for the Fleſh*, &c. and it will follow neceſſarily. We hear much to little Purpoſe. O! to have the Heart touched by the Spirit with ſuch a Word as is here, it would unty it from all theſe Things. Theſe are the Words, the very reading of which wrought ſo with *Auguſtine*, that, of a licentious young Man, he turned a holy faithful Servant of Jeſus Chriſt. While you were without Chriſt, you had no higher nor other Buſineſs to do, but to attend and ſerve the Fleſh; but once having put him on, you are other Men, and other Manners do become you, *Alia ætas alios mores poſtulat.*

This forbids not eating and drinking and cloathing, and providing for theſe, nor Decency and Comelineſs

lineſs in them: The *putting on of Chriſt* does not bar the ſober Uſe of them; yea, the moderate providing for the Neceſſities of the Fleſh, while thou art tied to dwell in it, that may be done in ſuch a Way as ſhall be a Part of thy Obedience and Service to God; but to *lay in Proviſions for the Luſts of it*, is to victual and furniſh his Enemy and thine own: For the *Luſts of the Fleſh* do ſtrive againſt God's Spirit, and war againſt thy Soul, *Gal.* v. 17. 1 *Pet.* ii. 11.

This was the Quarrel betwixt God and his own People in the Wilderneſs: Bread for their *Neceſſities* he gave them, but they required Bread for their *Luſts*, (which ſhould rather been ſtarved to Death than fed) and many of them fell in the Quarrel: He gave them their Deſire, but gave them a Plague with it, and they died with the Meat between their Teeth. Many that ſeem to follow God, and to have put on Chriſt, yet continuing in League with their Luſts, and providing for them, they are permitted a while ſo to do, and are not withheld from their Deſire, and ſeem to proſper in the Buſineſs; but though not ſo ſudden and ſenſible as that of the *Iſraelites*, there is no leſs certain a Curſe joined with all they purchaſe and provide for that unhallowed Uſe. 'Tis certainly the Poſture and Employment of moſt of us, even that are called *Chriſtians*, to be Purveyors for the Fleſh, even for *the Luſts of it* †; theſe Luſts comprehending all ſenſual, and all worldly Fleſh ſelf-pleaſing Projects, even ſome Things that ſeem a little more decent and refined, come under this Account. What are Men commonly doing, but projecting and labouring beyond Neceſſity, for fuller and finer Proviſion for *Back and Belly*, and to feed their Pride, and raiſe themſelves and theirs ſomewhat above the Condition of others about them? And where Mens Intereſts meet in the Teeth, and croſs each other,

† *Ad ſupervacuum ſudare.*

ther, there ariſe Heart-burnings and Debates, and an evil Eye, one againſt another, even on a fancied Prejudice, where there is nothing but croſſing an Humour: So the grand Idol is their own Will that muſt be provided for, and ſerved in all Things, that takes them up early and late, how they may be at Eaſe, and pleaſed, and eſteemed and honoured. This is the *Proviſion for the Fleſh and its Luſts*; and from this are all they called that have *put on Chriſt*, not to a hard, mean, unpleaſant Life, inſtead of that other, but to a far more high and more truly pleaſant Life, that diſgraces all thoſe their former Purſuits that they thought ſo gay, while they knew no better. There is a tranſcendent Sweetneſs in Chriſt, that puts the Fleſh out of Credit. *Put on Chriſt*, thy Robe Royal, and *make no Proviſion*, &c. and ſure thou will not then go and turmoil in the Kitchen. A Soul cloathed with Chriſt, ſtooping to any ſinful Delight, or an ardent Purſuit of any thing earthly, though lawful, doth wonderfully indignify itſelf: Methinks it is as a King's Son in his princely Apparel, playing the Scullion, ſitting down to turn the Spits. A Soul living in Chriſt indeed hath no Vacancy for the ſuperfluous luxurious Demands of Fleſh, yea, ſupplies the very Neceſſities of it with a kind of Regret, *A neceſſitatibus meis libera me, Domine*, ſaid one.

Oh! raiſe up your Spirits, you that pretend to any thing in Chriſt, delight in him, and let his Love ſatisfy you at all Times. What need you go a begging elſewhere? All you would add makes you the poorer, abates ſo much of your Enjoyment of him; and what can compenſate that? *Put on the Lord Jeſus*, and then view yourſelves, and ſee if you be fit to be Slaves to Fleſh and Earth.

Theſe two, *Put on the Lord Jeſus*, and, *Make no Proviſion*, are directly the Repreſentation of the Church, *Apoc.* xii. A Woman cloathed with the Sun,

Sun, and the Moon under her Feet, needed borrow no Beauty from it, or any thing under it. She left the Scarlet, and the Purple, and Gold, to the Harlot after ſpoken of, for her Dreſſing.

The Service of the Fleſh is a Work the Chriſtian cannot ſold to, till he forget what Cloaths he has on. This is all, my Brethren. Oh! that we could be perſuaded once to *put on Chriſt*, and then reſolve and remember to do nothing unbeſeeming that Attire.

SERMON II.

PSAL. CVII. 43.

Whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve thoſe Things, even they ſhall underſtand the loving Kindneſs of the Lord.

MOſt Men live a brutal ſenſitive Life, live not ſo much as the Life of Reaſon; but far fewer the Divine Life of Faith, which is further above common human Reaſon than that is above Senſe. The ſpiritual Light of Grace is that which makes Day in the Soul; all other Wiſdom is but Night-light, *Then I ſaw that Wiſdom excelleth Folly, as far as Light excelleth Darkneſs*, Eccl. ii. 13. This higher Sort of Knowledge is that the Prophet ſpeaks of.

Having diſcourſed excellently through the Pſalm, of the Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs of God, ſo legible in his Providence towards Men, and often called up the dull Minds of Men to conſider theſe his Works, and bleſs him for them, he cloſes with this Applaudment of their Happineſs that truly do ſo, *Whoſo is wiſe*, &c.

They

They that ſpake it, know not how true their Speech is, that have called the World *a Neſt of Fools.* 'Tis true, there is very little, even of natural Clearneſs of Judgment amongſt Men, but ſure far leſs of this true ſpiritual Wiſdom; ſo that, if we read this as a Queſtion, *Whoſo is wiſe?* Oh! how few, and yet moſt imagine they are, few convinced they are Fools, and that is the Height of their Folly. That Word is moſt true, *Job* xi. 12. *Vain Man would be wiſe, though he be born as the wild Aſs's Colt.* In Youth he runs wild, unbroken and unuſeful, and in fuller Age hath but a brutiſh ſlaviſh Life, yokes in with his Beaſts, in the ſame kind of Labour, or in little better; turmoiling and drudging to ſerve his baſe Luſts, his Gain, his Pleaſure, and forgets quite what high Condition the Soul that ſparkles within him is born to, and made capable of; in a Word, knows not God. That is both his Folly and Miſery. How much paſſes, e're we conſider what we live for? And though all applied, how incapable are a great many to know any thing *? To this purpoſe there is a notable Word, *Job.* xi. 8, 9.

Now, to ſtir up your Deſires and Endeavours after this Wiſdom; conſider, that it is the proper Excellency of the rational Nature, the true Elevation of human Nature, to be wiſe: And they that are not ſuch, or know ſomewhat of their own Defect, yet would willingly paſs for ſuch, and had rather be accounted uncomely, yea, even unhoneſt, than unwiſe, (call a Man any thing rather than a Fool;) but yet, if they could, would rather have the Thing than the Reputation of it, and deſire really to be wiſe, if it were in their Power.

Now, it were good to work on this Deſign within us, and to have it drawn into the right Channel. Would you be wiſe, then ſeek true Wiſdom. The moſt

* *Inter homines quid homine rarius?*

moſt that Men ſeek and admire in themſelves and others, are but falſe Shadows and Appearances of Wiſdom; Knowledge either of baſe low Things, as to ſcrape and gather together, or elſe of vain, unprofitable Things, and that Knowledge that is for the moſt part but imaginary: For moſt Things in State-Affairs take another Biaſs and Courſe, are not ſo much modelled by Wit, as moſt Men imagine; and for the Secrets of Nature, we have little certain Knowledge of them; how ſhort is our Life to attain any Knowledge? (that is an excellent Word, *Job* viii. 9.) but the Knowledge here ſet before us, is the beſt kind of Knowledge, of the higheſt Things, Divine Things: I ſay, the beſt kind of Knowledge of them; for there are Notions, even of theſe Things, that have little in them, either curious fruitleſs Diſputations of ſuch Points as are moſt removed both from our Notice and our Uſe, or an uſeleſs Knowledge of uſeful Things: But this is a well-regulated and ſure-footed Knowledge of Divine Things, as God himſelf hath revealed them.

This Wiſdom deſcends from above; therefore, for the Attainment of it, theſe two are neceſſary, *1ſt*, To know that we want it, ſenſibly and feelingly to know this, that we know nothing of the Things of God. *Multi ad ſapientiam pervenirent, niſi ſe jam-jam perveniſſe arbitrarentur. Many Men would have attained to Wiſdom, if they had not fancied or imagined that they had already attained to it.* I ſpeak not now of the loweſt Sort, the groſly, the brutiſhly ignorant, even of the Letter of of Divine Truths, but ſuch as can give themſelves or others, if put to it, a good Account of the Principles of Faith and Holineſs, have read and heard much, and poſſibly learned and retained not a little that Way, yet ſtill are but Ignorants, Strangers to this heavenly Wiſdom: Therefore Men muſt firſt

know this, that they may go new to School again and become as little Children, 1 *Cor.* iii. 19. Wiſdom invites no other, *Prov.* ix. 4. The *ſtrange Woman*, and ſo all the Inticements to Sin, they invite the ſame Perſons, *Ver.* 16. but to a direct oppoſite End: She calls the Fools to befool them, to drown them in Folly and Wretchedneſs; but Wiſdom calls them, to unbefool them, to recover them, and teach them the Way of Life.

2*dly*, Being convinced and ſenſible of the Want of it, to uſe the right Way to attain it, to give all diligent Attendance on the Word and Ordinances of God, to deſire it of him. Deſire is all: If you deſire much, you ſhall have much. Vent thy Deſire this Way Heavenwards, whence this Wiſdom deſcends, this Light ſprings from on high: Man cannot raiſe himſelf to it without another; *If any Man lack Wiſdom*, if he is but once ſenſible of that; why then the ſweeteſt, eaſieſt Way to attain it that can be deſired, is pointed out, *let him ask it of God, who gives liberally, and reproaches not*, does neither harſhly refuſe, nor upbraidingly give it, delights to give it to them that ask it, even his own Holy Spirit, the Spring of this Wiſdom, as he hath promiſed.

We are all too little in this humble ſeeking and begging this Divine Knowledge, and that is the Cauſe we are ſo ſhallow and ſmall Proficients: If thou cry and lift up thy Voice for Underſtanding, *Prov.* ii. 3, &c. ſearch for it as for hid Treaſures; ſit down upon thy Knees and dig for it: That is the beſt Poſture, to fall right upon the Golden Vein, and go deepeſt to know the Mind of God, in ſearching the Scriptures, to be directed and regulated in his Ways, to be made skilful in Ways of honouring him, and doing him Service; this, Men nor Angels cannot teach him, but himſelf alone.

Of this Wiſdom we have here the *Character* and *Pri-*

Privilege: 1*ſt*, The *Character*; that *obſerves thoſe Things*, that looks back to the Doctrine of the Pſalmiſt, which is very divinely ſweet, extolling the Goodneſs of God in general in his Dealings with Men, and inſtancing in divers occurſant and remarkable Particulars the Fitneſs and Mildneſs of his Chaſtiſements, the Seaſonableneſs and Sweetneſs of his Deliverances, correcting us for our greater Good, and relieving us in our greateſt Need, when we are neareſt deſpairing of Relief: This is exemplified in Travellers and Priſoners, in ſick Men and Seamen, and in the various Diſpoſal of the State of all Sorts of Perſons, the higheſt and the meaneſt; and the repeated ſweet Burden of the Song is, *O that Men would praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs*, &c. And in the End the Reſult of all, *Ver.* 42. the Joy of the Godly, the Shame and Silencing of the Wicked, that uſually either miſtake, or ſlight, or deſpiſe the Providence of God in the Rule of human Affairs, readily ſpeak big their own Thoughts, which are vain, promiſing themſelves continual Succeſs: In the End he ſhall clear himſelf, and glad the Souls of his People, and cloath his Enemies with Shame. Wait a while, and thus it ſhall be; they ſhall change Places. He pours Contempt upon Princes, and ſets the Poor on high from Affliction, and ſo rights himſelf, and them that wait on him. Then *the Righteous ſhall ſee it and rejoice, and all Iniquity ſhall ſtop her Mouth*; and it is a great Point of true Wiſdom, rightly to obſerve theſe Things.

This Obſerving hath in it, 1*ſt*, A believing Notice of theſe Things, to take ſuch Inſtances aright, when they meet our Eye, to know theſe Things to be indeed the Lord's Doings; and ſo, when we are in any preſent Strait, to believe accordingly the ſame Inſpection of his Eye, and ſecret Conduct of his Hand, to be in all. Now, it is a great Point to

have the Heart eſtabliſhed in theſe Perſuaſions. We are generally much defective in this, and they moſt that leaſt ſuſpect themſelves of it. But withal, the obſerving or keeping theſe Things, (ſo the Word is) this firm Believing hath in it theſe two, following on it, and flowing from it, *ſerious Contemplation*, and *ſuitable Action*.

1*ſt*, Often to turn our Eye to the View of theſe Things, and to keep it on them, ſo as to have our Hearts warmed with them, to be deeply taken with Wonder and Love. But alas! our Souls are drowned in Fleſh, dragged down from Things that become them, and are worthy of them, to drudge and weary themſelves in the Mire and Clay. How few are there that make it a great Part of their daily Buſineſs, to behold God in his Works and Ways with themſelves and others? Some, in reſpect of others, are called *great Spirits:* But Oh! What are they? What a poor Greatneſs is it, to project for a great Eſtate, or great Places and Titles, or to conceive great Revenges of little Wrongs? There is ſomething even in Nature of Greatneſs of Spirit, very far beyond the baſtard falſe Character that moſt take of it; that is above moſt Things others imagine great, and deſpiſes them: But true Greatneſs is this, to have a Mind much taken up with the Greatneſs of God, admiring and adoring him, and exciting others to do ſo; grieved, and holily angry, that Men regard him ſo little, breathing forth ſuch Wiſhes, as theſe of the Pſalmiſt, both to expreſs their own Thoughts, and to awake ſleeping beſotted Men about them. *O that Men would praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs*, &c. could wiſh a Voice that could reach many Thouſands; and if they had one audible to all the World, would uſe it no otherwiſe than to be Precentors of the Praiſes of God, to call up and begin the Song, *O that Men would praiſe*, &c.

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Conſider yourſelves, my Brethren, and trace yourſelves into your own Hearts, whether often in the Day your Thoughts run this Way, finding the Meditation of God ſweet to you, or if they do not run out much more to vain Things, and are ſeldom here; either hurried and buſied in a Surcharge of Affairs; or, if vacant, yet ſpinning themſelves out in frothy fooliſh Fancies, that you would be aſhamed to look back upon. You might entertain divine and heavenly Thoughts, even while about your earthly Employments and Refreſhments; but this is little known, and little ſought after. Make it your Buſineſs to learn more of this Wiſdom: Call in your Hearts, commune often with yourſelves and with God; be leſs abroad, and more within, and more above: It is by far the ſweeteſt Life. Beg of God to wind up your Hearts, when you find them heavy and dull, that they follow you ſlowly in this, and need much pulling and haling from your Hand; a Touch from his Hand will make them mount up eaſily and nimbly. Oh! ſeek his Drawing: *Draw me, we will run after thee.* And when you meet together, let this be your Buſineſs, to ſpeak of him that alone is to be exalted, that doth and diſpoſeth all as he pleaſes. Say to Friends, and Kindred, and Neighbours, O! how great and how gracious a God have we! Oh! that we could bleſs him!

2*dly*, To keep theſe Things, is to walk according to the firm Belief and frequent Thoughts of them, to fear him, and to walk humbly and warily, becauſe our Follies draw on his Rods, and to ſtudy to pleaſe him, and no matter who be diſpleaſed; and when he corrects, to fall down humbly under his Hand, that hath our Sickneſs and Health, our Life and Death, and all that concerns us, in his abſolute Power. If any thing advance or advantage us before others, endeavour to be the more lowly and ſer-

ſerviceable to him; if in a low Condition, to bleſs and reverence him, for his Preſence will turn the meaneſt Cottage, yea, the darkeſt Dungeon, into a Palace.

The chief Delight of the Saints is to offer Praiſes to God, to gather them in from all his Works, to ſend up to him: And his chief Delight in all his Works is to receive theſe Praiſes of them from their Hands; they articulate them, make a reaſonable Sacrifice of them, *Pſal.* cxlv. *All thy Works ſhall praiſe thee, and thy Saints ſhall bleſs thee.* We are called to this high Work, yet ly behind, and moſt unworthily and fooliſhly abaſe ourſelves in other Things.

But they that are wiſe, if there be any, will mind this, will not let the Lord's marvellous and gracious Doings paſs without Notice. It is a high Proof of his Love to us, that he loves to be ſeen work by us, and ſtoops to take our Acclamations and Approvements, hath ſuch Regard to them, and rewards them ſo richly; even thus, *Whoſo is wiſe, and will obſerve theſe Things, they ſhall underſtand the loving Kindneſs of the Lord.* Obſ. *They that are wiſe and obſerve, ſhall underſtand* further; *to him that hath ſhall be given*, to him that *uſefully hath*, that is, *to have*, and ſo there meant, improves it to his Advantage that gave it. The greateſt Difficulty is to begin, as one ſaid of his growing rich, "That he came hardly by a little "Riches, and eaſily by great Riches." Having once got a Stock, he grew rich apace; ſo once taking, be it but the firſt Leſſons of this Wiſdom, learning theſe well, ſhall facilitate thy Knowledge exceedingly: *The wiſe increaſeth Learning*, Prov. i. Wouldſt thou but receive and hearken to the eaſieſt Things repreſented by God, theſe would enlighten and enlarge thy Soul to receive more; eſpecially walking by the Light thou haſt, be it never ſo little, that invites and draws in more. Be diligent in the

Practice

Practice of that you know; if you would know more, believe it, that is the Way to grow: *Whoſo obſerves*, [keeps theſe Things, acts according to the Knowledge of them] he ſhall underſtand, *Joh.* vii. 17. ſhall underſtand it by finding it, (ſhall underſtand it in themſelves, the Word is in the reciprocal Mood, *Hithpahel*) it ſhall be particularly and effectually ſhown unto him; they ſhall experience it, and ſo underſtand it, and that is the only lively underſtanding of it. Men may hear, yea, deliver large Diſcourſes of it, and yet not underſtand the Thing: Happy are they to whom this is given; *Solus docet qui dat, & diſcit qui recipit.*

Loving Kindneſs.] Heb. *Graciouſneſs*; all Sorts of Kindneſſes, even outward and common Mercies, in thoſe ſhall he underſtand his Goodneſs, (in Recoveries and Deliveries from Dangers, and Bleſſings, be their Portion in them, leſs or more) though the Things be common, yet they come to be his own by a particular Stamp of Love, that to others they have not, and the Children of God know it, they can find it out, and can read it, though the World that looks on it cannot: And indeed, to them, the loweſt Things are diſpoſed of, in order to the higheſt; their daily Bread given them, by that ſame Love that gives them Chriſt, all is given in him: So the Curſe is taken away, and all is ſweetned with a Bleſſing. *A little that a righteous Man hath is better than the Abundance of the wicked.*

But the Things they chiefly prize and deſire, as indeed they deſerve ſo to be, are of another Sort; in their very Being and Nature, are Love-Tokens, Effects of that peculiar free Grace, that choſe them to Life; and this is called the *Light of God's Countenance, his everlaſting Love.* Now, *they that are wiſe, and obſerve theſe Things, they ſhall underſtand this loving Kindneſs:* Not that they firſt are thus *wiſe*, before

ſore they partake of this loving Kindneſs: No, by it this *Wiſdom* was given them; but this Promiſe is made to their Improvement of that Gift, and walking in thoſe *Ways of Wiſdom*: Not only are they loved of God, but they ſhall *underſtand* it; he will manifeſt himſelf to them, and tell them he loves them: And the more they walk in theſe Ways, the more clearly ſhall they perceive and powerfully find his Love manifeſted to them.

This is the higheſt Inducement that can be to ſuch as have any Intereſt in it; when this Love hath but once touched them, though as yet they know it not certainly, yet it works that Eſteem and Affection, that nothing can be admitted into Compariſon with it; while carnal Men wallow in the Puddle, theſe are the Cryſtal Streams a renewed Soul *deſires* to bathe in, even the Love of God. O! let me find that: No matter what I have, or what I want; in Poverty, or any diſtreſſed forſaken Condition, one good Word or good Look from him makes me up: I can ſit down content and chearful, and rejoice in that, though all the World frown on me, and all Things look dark and comfortleſs about me, that is a Piece of Heaven within the Soul. Now, of this experimental underſtanding Knowledge of this Love, there are different Degrees, a great Latitude in this: To ſome, at ſometimes little Glimpſes and Inlets of it, in a more immediate way, (but theſe ſtay not, *ſuavis hora, ſed brevis mora*;) others are upheld in the Belief of it, and live on it by Faith; though it ſhine not ſo clear, yet a Light they have to walk by: Though the Sun ſhines not bright out to them all their Life, yet they are led home, and underſtand ſo much Love in their Way, as ſhall bring them to the Fulneſs of it in the End. Others, having paſt moſt of the Day, have a fair Glimpſe in the very Evening or Cloſe of it; but, howſoever, they that walk

walk in this Way by this Light, whatſoever Meaſure they have of it, are led by it to the Land of Light. The Connexion here made you ſee, *They that wiſely* obſerve *theſe Things*, *ſhall* underſtand *this loving Kindneſs*. *A wiſe obſerving of God's Ways*, and *ordering our own* to his Mind, is the certain Way to attain much experienced Knowledge of his Love.

This Love is moſt free, and from the Beginning to the End works of itſelf; but, in the Method of it, he hath thus linked Things together, made one Portion of Grace, in the Uſe of it, draw on another; and this his Children would prudently conſider. There is ſuch a like Speech, *Pſal.* l. 23. *Whoſo offereth Praiſe, glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his Converſation aright, will I ſhew the Salvation of God.*

The *Contemplation* of God in his Works, ſets the Soul open to receive the Influences of Love; by looking towards him, it draws his Eye towards it, as one Look of Love draws on another. Certainly, many that have ſome Deſire of the Light of God's Countenance, and Evidences of his Love; yet, in not applying their Souls to conſider him, do much prejudge themſelves.

Heavenly Thoughts do refine the Soul, as Fire works itſelf higher, and to a purer Flame, by ſtirring. To be bleſſing God for his Goodneſs, giving him Praiſe in View of his Works in the World, and for his Church, and particularly for us; this both diſpoſes the Heart to a more ſuitable Temper for receiving Divine Comforts, and invites him to let them flow in into it. For if he have ſuch Acknowledgments for general Goodneſs and common Mercies, how much larger Returns ſhall he have upon the Diſcoveries of ſpecial Love? It is a Sight of God as reconciled thou would'ſt have; now, Praiſe ſets a Man amongſt the Angels, and they behold his Face.

Again, *Action*, walking in his Ways humbly and

carefully, and ſo waiting, never wants a ſucceſsful Return of much Love. How can he, who is Goodneſs itſelf, hide and reſerve himſelf from a Soul that yields up itſelf to him, hath no Delight but to pleaſe him, hates and avoids what may offend him? This, ſure, is the Way, if any under Heaven, to enjoy Communion with him.

They that forget him, and diſregard their Ways, and are no way careful to order them to his liking, do but delude themſelves with miſtaken Fancies of Mercy. I beſeech you be warned; there cannot be ſolid Peace in the Ways of Sin: *No Peace to the Wicked, ſaith my God.* Outward common Favours you may ſhare for a Time; but theſe have a Curſe with them to you, and you ſhall quickly be at an End of theſe Receipts; and then you would look towards him for ſome Perſuaſions of his loving Kindneſs, but are like to find nothing but Frowns and Diſpleaſure. O! *Conſider this, ye that forget God,* (that is the greateſt Diſeaſe) *leſt he tear you in Pieces, and there be none to deliver you.*

Even they that have ſome Title to this Love of God, and are deſiring further Evidence of it, yet do often ſit exceedingly in their own Light, and work againſt their End, ſtill bent on that Aſſurance they would have, and yet neglect the Way to it, which certainly is in a manner to neglect it. Were they more buſied in honouring God, doing him what Service they can in their Station, ſtriving againſt Sin, acknowledging his Goodneſs to the World, and even to themſelves, that they are yet in the Region of Hope, not cut off in their Iniquities. Thus *offering Praiſe*, and *ordering their Converſation aright*, ſubmitting unto him, and giving him Glory, their Aſſurances and Comforts, in the Meaſure he thinks fit, would come in due Time, and

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ſooner in this Way than in any other they could take.

Obſerve theſe Things; beware of Sin, and *ye ſhall underſtand the loving Kindneſs of the Lord.* It is true, this Love of God changes not, nor hangs on thy Carriage, nor any thing without itſelf; yea, all our Good hangs on it: But know, as to the Knowledge and Apprehenſion of it, it depends much on the holy Frame of thy Heart, and exact Regulation of thy Ways. Sin obſtructs and darkens all: Theſe are the Clouds and Miſts; and where any Believer is adventurous on the Ways of Sin, he ſhall ſmart for it. Where Sin is, there will be a Storm, as *Chryſoſtom*'s Word is of *Joſhuah* *, the Experience of all witneſſeth this: No Strength of Faith will keep out Floods of doubting and troublous Thoughts, where any novel Sin hath opened a Gap for them to ruſh in by. See *David*, *Pſal.* li. expreſſing himſelf, as if all were to begin again, his Joy taken away, and his Bones broken, and to Senſe all undone; nothing will ſerve but a *new Creature. Create in me a clean Heart, O God, and renew a right Spirit within me.*

There is a Congruity in the Thing itſelf, and God hath ſo ordered it, that Vexation and Anguiſh ſtill attend Sin, and the Ways of Holineſs be Ways of Peace. Say Men what they will, great Falls leave Wounds and Smart behind them, and they muſt be waſhed with ſharper Liquor before Balm and Oil be poured into them. And not only will more notorious Breaches diſturb thy Peace, but a Tract of careleſs and fruitleſs Walking. If thou abate of thy Attendance on God, and thy Fear cool towards him, lagging and falling downwards to ſomething you are caring for and taken with, you ſhall find an Eſtrangement, may be, inſenſible at firſt, and for a while, becauſe of thy Sloth, that doſt not obſerve

* Ὅτου ἁμαρτία, ἐκεῖ χειμών.

diligently how it is with thee; but, after a Time, it ſhall be more eaſily known, but more hardly mended: And there is none of us but might find much more of God in this our Way homewards, if the Fooliſhneſs and Wandrings of our Hearts did not prejudge us.

Be perſuaded then you whoſe Hearts he hath wrought for himſelf, to attend better on him, and the Advantage ſhall be yours: Doubt it not; and though for a Time you find it not, yet wait on, and go on in that Way, it ſhall not diſappoint you. The more you let go of the falſe vain Comforts of the World for his Sake, the more richly you ſhall be furniſhed with his. Oh! we make not Room for them; that is the great Hindrance: Conſider him, behold his Works, bleſs him, confeſs him always worthy of *Praiſe for his Goodneſs, and his wonderful Works to the Children of Men*, however he deal with thee in particular; and aſſuredly he ſhall deal graciouſly with thee; and e're long thou ſhalt find, and be forced to acknowledge it: Though it may be thou want theſe bright Shinings of Comforts thou wouldſt have, yet, looking to him, and walking before him, obſerving theſe Things, thou ſhalt have of his Light to lead thee on, and a Calm within; ſweet Peace, though not that Height of Joy thou deſireſt.

There be often calm fair Days without Storm, though it be not ſo clear Sun-ſhine, and in ſuch Days a Man may travel comfortably. I would have Chriſtians called off from a perplexed over-preſſing this Point, of their particular Aſſurance. If we were more ſtudious to pleaſe him, forgetting ourſelves, we ſhould find him remember us the more; yet not for this neither, but ſimply for himſelf. In a Word, this is thy Wiſdom; mind thy Duty, and refer to him thy Comfort.

SER-

SERMON III.

Psal. CXIX. 96.

I have ſeen an End of all Perfection; but thy Commandment is exceeding broad.

GRace is a Divine Light in the Soul, and ſhews the true Colours of Things. The Apoſtle overſhoots not, when he ſays, *The ſpiritual Man judgeth all Things:* He hath undeniably the Advantage: He may judge of natural Things, but the natural Man cannot judge of ſpiritual Things; yea, the trueſt Judgment of natural Things, in reſpect to our chiefeſt End, ſprings particularly from ſpiritual Wiſdom, that makes the true Parallel of Things, and gives a juſt Account of their Differences, as here.

I have ſeen an End, &c. All that have any Meaſure of ſpiritual Light are of this Mind, but certainly they that are more eminently bleſt with it, have a more high and clearer View of both Parts. *David*, who is generally, and with greateſt Likelihood, ſuppoſed to be the Author of this Pſalm, was ſingularly advantaged to make this Judgment of Things: He had, no doubt, a large Meaſure of the Knowledge of God and of his Law, which here he declares to be ſo large; and being both a wiſe and a great Man, might know more than moſt others, even of all other Perfections, trace them to their utmoſt, and ſee their End, as he expreſſes it. This ſame Verdict we have from his Son *Solomon*, after much Experience in all Things; who having the Advantage of Peace and Riches, did particularly ſet himſelf to this Work, to a moſt exact Enquiry after all Things of this Earth: He ſet Nature on the Rack, to confeſs its utmoſt Strength, for the delighting and

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ſatisfying of Man; with much Pains and Art extracted the very Spirits of all; and, after all, gives the ſame Judgment we have here, his Book writ on that Subject being a Paraphraſe on this Sentence, dilating the Senſe, and confirming the Truth of it. It carries its own Sum in theſe two Words, which begin and end it, that *Vanity of Vanities*, and *all is Vanity*; and the other, *Fear God, and keep his Commandments*, that is the *whole Duty of Man*: And theſe here are juſt the Equivalent of theſe two; the former of that beginning Word, *I have ſeen an End of all Perfection*; and the latter of that, *but thy Commandment is exceeding broad*. And when mean Men ſpeak of this World's Greatneſs, and poor Men cry down Riches, it paſſes but for a querulous peeviſh Humour, to diſcredit Things they cannot reach, or elſe an ignorant Miſpriſion of Things they do not underſtand; or, taking it a little further, but a ſelf-pleaſing Shift, willingly underprizing theſe Things of purpoſe, to allay the Diſpleaſure of the Want of them; or at the beſt, if ſomething of Truth and Goodneſs be in the Opinion, yet that the Aſſent of ſuch Perſons is (as the Temperance of ſickly Bodies) rather a Virtue made of Neceſſity, than embraced of free Choice: But to hear a wiſe Man, in the Height of theſe Advantages, proclaim their Vanity, yea, Kings from the very Thrones whereon they ſit, in their royal Robes, to give forth this Sentence upon all the Glories and Delights about them, is certainly above all Exception. Here are two, the Father and the Son; the one raiſed from a mean Condition to the Crown; inſtead of a Shepherd's Staff, to wield a Sceptre, and that, after many Afflictions and Dangers in the Way to it, which to ſome Palates gives a higher Reliſh and Sweetneſs to Honour, than if it had ſlid on them, e're they could feel it, in the cheap eaſy way of an undoubted Succeſſion. Or, if any think *David*'s beſt Days a little cloudy,

dy, by the Remains of Inſurrections and Oppoſitions, in that Caſe uſual, as the jumbling of the Water not fully quieted for a while after the ſame is over; then take the Son, ſucceeding to as fair a Day as Heart can wiſh, both a compleat Calm of Peace, and bright Sun-ſhine of Riches and Regal Pomp, (and he able to improve theſe to the higheſt;) and yet both theſe are perfectly of the ſame Mind in this great Point. The Son having Peace, and Time for it, though a King, would make his Throne a Pulpit, and be a Preacher of this one Doctrine, to which the Father's Sentence is the fitteſt Text I have ſeen.

The Words give an Account of a double Proſpect; the latter, as it were, the Diſcovery of a new World after the travelling over the old, expreſſed in the former Clauſe, *I have ſeen an End of all Perfection*, *i. e.* taken an exact View of all other Things, and ſeen their End; *but thy Commandment* is of exceeding Extent and Perfection, and I ſee but a Part, and there is no End of it.

I have ſeen an End.] I have tried and made Experiment of much of what this World affords, and the reſt I ſee to the uttermoſt of it, how far it reaches. The Pſalmiſt, as ſtanding on a vantage Ground, ſees clearly round about him the fartheſt Horizon of earthly Excellencies and Advantages, and finds them not to be infinite or unmeaſurable, ſees that they are bounded, yea, what their Bounds are, how far they go at their very fartheſt, *an End of all*, even Perfection; and this is in effect what I find, that their End drops ſhort of Satisfaction. A Man may think and deſire beyond them, yea, not only *may*, but *muſt*; he cannot be terminate by their Bounds, will ſtill have a Stretch further, and feels them leave him, and then finds a Void: All which he ſays moſt ponderouſly in theſe ſhort Words; giving the World the Slight, thus, " It is not ſo great a

" Matter

" Matter as Men imagine it; the beſt of it I have " examined, and conſidered it to the full, taken the " whole Dimenſion: All the Profits and Pleaſures " under the Sun, their utmoſt goes but a ſhort Way; " the Soul is vaſter than all, can look and go much " farther."

I will not attempt the Particulars, to reckon all, or be large in any; the Preacher *Solomon* hath done this matchleſly, and *who is he that can come after the King?* If any be ſick of that poor Diſeaſe, Eſteem of Riches, he can tell you the utmoſt of theſe, that when they increaſe, they are increaſed that eat them, *and what Good is to the Owners thereof, ſave the beholding of them with their Eyes.* Yea, locking them up, and not uſing them, and ſtill gathering, and all to no Uſe; this is a Madneſs, it is all one as if they were ſtill in the Mines under the Ground, and the Difference none, but in turmoiling Pains in gathering, and tormenting Care in keeping. But take the beſt View of them, ſuppoſing that they be uſed, *i. e.* ſpent on Family and Retinue; why then, what hath the Owner but the Sight of them for himſelf? Of all his Diſhes, he fills but one Belly; of all his fair Houſes, and rich furniſh'd Rooms, he lodges but in one at once; and if his great Rent be needful for his great Train, or any other Ways of Expence, is it a Vantage to need much? Or is he not rather poorer that needs Five or Six thouſand Pounds by Year, than he that needs but One hundred?

Of all the Feſtivities of the World, and Delights of Senſe, the Reſult is, Laughter is mad, and Mirth, and Orchards, and Muſick, theſe Things paſs away as a Dream, and as ſtill to begin; and ſo groſs and earthly are they, that for the Beaſts they may be a fit Good; for the divine immortal Soul they cannot. A Horſe lying at Eaſe in a fat Paſture may be compared with thoſe that take Delight in them.

Honour

Honour and Eſteem are yet vainer than theſe Pleaſures and Riches that furniſh them: Though they be nothing but Wind, compared to ſolid Soul-Delights; yet as to Nature, there is in them ſomewhat more real than in the Fame of Honour, which is no more indeed than an airy imaginary thing, and hangs more on others than any thing elſe, and not only on Perſons above them, but even theſe below; eſpecially that Kind, that the Vanity of Man is much taken with, all popular Opinion, than which there is nothing more light and poor, and that is more deſpiſed by the elevated Sort of natural Spirits; a Thing as unworthy as it is unconſtant. No Slavery like the affecting of vulgar Eſteem; it enthrals the Mind to all Sorts, often the worthieſt ſhare leaſt in it, *Eccleſ.* ix. 11, 15. True Worth is but ſometimes honoured, but always envied, *Eccleſ.* iv. 4. And with whomſoever it is thou ſeekeſt to be eſteemed, be it with the Multitude, or more chiefly with the wiſer and better Sort, what a narrow thing is it at largeſt? How many Nations neither know thee, nor thoſe that know thee?

Beyond all theſe Things is inward Worth, and even that natural Wiſdom, ſuch as ſome Minds have, to a far more refined Height than others; a Man by it ſees round about him, yea, and within himſelf: That *Solomon* grants to be an excellent Thing, *Chap.* iv. 13. yet preſently finds the End of that Perfection, *Ver.* 16. that guards not from Diſaſters and Vexations; yea, there is in it an innate Grief, amidſt ſo many Follies, *Chap.* vii. 18. Yea, give a Man the Confluence of all theſe, which is ſo rare, make him at once rich and honourable, and healthful, and encompaſſed with all the Delights of Nature and Art, and wiſe, to make the beſt Improvement of all they can well afford, and there is much in that; yet there *is an End of all theſe Perfections!*

For there is quickly an End of himſelf that hath them; he dies, and that ſpoils all; breaks the Strings, and that ends the Muſick. And the higheſt of natural Wiſdom, which is the Soul of all Nature's Advantages, that ends then, if practical or political. In that Day are all State Projects and high Thoughts laid low, if ſpeculative; for in ſpite of all Sciences and Knowledge of Nature, a Man goes out in the Dark; and if thou art learned in many Languages, one Death ſilences all thy Tongues at once. So *Solomon*, *Eccleſ.* ii. 16. Yea, I ſuppoſe a Man were not broke off, but continued ſtill in the Top of all theſe Perfections; yea, imagine much more, the chiefeſt Delights of Senſe that have ever been found out, more ſolid and certain Knowledge of Nature's Secrets, all moral Compoſure of Spirit, the higheſt Dominion, not only over Men, but a deputed Command over Nature's Frame, the Courſe of all the Heavens, the Affairs of all the Earth, and that he was to abide in this Eſtate; yet would he ſee *an End of this Perfection*, that is, it would come ſhort of making him happy. It is an Union with a higher Good by that Love that ſubjects all Things to him, that alone is the endleſs Perfection: *Thy Commandment is exceeding broad.*

You may think this a beaten Subject, and poſſibly ſome other Caſes or Queſtions fitter for Chriſtians; I wiſh it were more needleſs: But Oh! the Deceitfulneſs of our Hearts; even ſuch as have ſhut out the Vanities of this World at the Fore-gate, let them in again, or ſome Part of them at leaſt, at the Poſtern. Few Hearts clearly come off untied from all, ſtill lagging after ſomewhat, and thence ſo little delight in God, in Prayer, and holy Things; and though there be no fixed Eſteem of other Things, yet that Undiſpoſedneſs to holy Ways argues ſome ſickly Humour latent in the Soul, and therefore this

is almoſt generally needful, that Men be called to conſider what they ſeek after. Amidſt all thy Purſuits, ſtop, and ask thy Soul, For what End all this? At what do I aim? For, ſure by Mens Heat in theſe lower Things, and their cold Indifference for Heaven, it would ſeem we take our Portion to be here: But, Oh! miſerable Portion at the beſt! O! ſhort-lived Happineſs! Look on them, and learn to ſee this the *End of all Perfections*; and have an Eye beyond them, till your Hearts be well weaned from all Things under the Sun. Oh! there is little Acquaintance with the Things that are above it, little Love of them; ſtill ſome Pretenſions, ſome Hopes that flatter us, I will attain this or that; and then—Then what? What if *this Night, thou Fool, thy Soul ſhall be required of thee?*

But thy Commandment.] The former Part of this Sentence hath within every Man's Breaſt ſomewhat to ſuit with it and own it; readily, each Man according to his Experience, and the Capacity of his Soul, hath his Senſe (if awaking) of the Unſatisfaction of all this World; give him what thou wilt, yet ſtill there is empty Room within, and a Pain in that Emptineſs, and ſo Vexation; a tormenting Windineſs in all: And Men of more contemplative Minds have higher and clearer Thoughts of this Argument and Matter, and may riſe to a very high moral Contempt of the World, and ſome of them have done ſo. But this other Part is more ſublime, and peculiar to a Divine Illumination; that which we find not *without*, we would have *within*, and work out of ourſelves, which cannot be extracted from Things about us. Philoſophy is much on this, but it is upon a falſe Scent, and ſtill deluded: No, it is *without* us, not *within* us, but *above* us; that Fulneſs is in God, and no Communion with him, or Enjoyment of him, but in the Way of his Command-

ment: Therefore this is the Diſcovery that anſwers and ſatisfies, *Thy Commandment is exceeding broad. Commandment:* He ſpeaks of all as one, I conceive, for that Ty and Connexion of them all, for which he that breaks one is guilty of all: A Rule they are, and ſo one, as a Rule muſt be, one Authority through all; that is the golden Thread they are ſtrung on, break that any where, and all the Pearls drop off; *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have Reſpect to all thy Commandments:* Otherwiſe, one Piece ſhames another, like uneven and incongruous Ways; the Legs of the lame not being even, make an unſeemly Going. And as it is here, ſo a plural Word is joined with the ſingular, *Ver.* 137. and *Pſal.* cxxxii. *Deum tradunt Hebræi, unâ voce, eloquio uno*, hoc eſt, *uno Spiritu & halitu, ſine ulla interſpiratione, mora, pauſa, vel diſtinctione, ita ut omnia verba, tanquam verbum unum, & vox una, fuerant, elocutum. Atque hinc volunt duplicem illam accentuum rationem in Decalogo ortam, ut altera una, illa Dei continuata elocutio, altera hominum tarda & diſtincta, judicetur.*

And it is fitly here ſpoken of, as *one* oppoſed to all Varieties and Multitudes of Things beſide, *Thy Commandment*, each linked to one another; and that one Chain reaches beyond all the incoherent Perfections in the World, if one were added to another, and drawn to a length. *This Commandment is exceeding broad*; the very *Breadth* immenſe, and therefore the *Length* muſt be much more ſo, no End of it. That Good to which it leads and joins the Soul, is enough for it; compleat and full in its Nature, and endleſs in its Continuance: So that there is no meaſuring, no End of it any way; but all other *Perfections* have their Bounds of Being, and Period of Duration; ſo each Way an End is to be found of them. Now, in this the Oppoſition is the more admirable,

that

that he ſpeaks not expreſly of the Enjoyment of God, but of the Commandment of God: He extols that above all the Perfections of the World; which is much to be remarked, as having in it a clear Character of the pureſt and higheſt Love. It had been more obvious to all, had he ſaid, "I have ſeen the "utmoſt of all beſides thee, but thou, O God, the "Light of thy Countenance, the bleſſed Viſion of "thy Face, that alone boundleſs and endleſs Hap-"pineſs;" or to have taken it below the full perfect Enjoyment of Glory, but ſome Glances let in to the Soul here, a comfortable Word from God, a Look of Love. O! how far ſurpaſſing all the continued Careſſes and Delights of the World; he ſpeaks not of that neither, but *Thy Commandment is exceeding broad.* As the Apoſtle ſays, *The Fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than Mens Wiſdom*, 1 Cor. i. So here, that of God that ſeems loweſt and hardeſt, is infinitely beyond whatſoever is higheſt and ſweeteſt in the World; the obeying his Commands, his very Service is more profitable than the World's Rewards; his Commands more excellent than the Perfection of the World's Enjoyments: To be ſubject to him is truer Happineſs than to command the whole World. Pure Love reckons thus, "Though no further Re-"ward were to follow, Obedience to God (the Per-"fection of his Creature, and its very Happineſs) "carries its full Recompenſe in its own Boſom." Yea, Love delights moſt in the hardeſt Services: It is Self-love to love the Embraces and Reſt of Love, but it is Love to him indeed to love the Labour of Love, and the Service of it; and that not ſo much becauſe it leads to Reſt, and ends in it, but becauſe it is Service to him whom we love: Yea, that Labour is in itſelf a Reſt; it is ſo natural and ſweet to a Soul that loves, as the Revolution of the Heavens, which is a Motion in Reſt, and Reſt in Motion;

changes

changes not Place, though running ſtill: So the Motion of Love is truly heavenly, and circular ſtill in God; beginning in him, and ending in him; and ſo not ending, but ſtill moving without Wearineſs.

Let us ſee what the Commandment is, and that will clear it; for it is nothing but Love: All is in that one, *Love the Lord*, &c. So the *Command* that is here called ſo broad, is *Love*; there is no meaſuring that, for its Object is immenſurable. We readily exceed in the Love of any other thing; but in the Love of God, there is no Danger of exceeding; its true Meaſure is to know no Meaſure.

According as the Love is, ſo is the Soul; it is made like to, yea, it is made one with that which it loves. By loving groſs baſe Things, it becomes groſs, and turns to Fleſh, or Earth; and ſo, by the Love of God, is made divine, is one with him *. So this is the Excellency of the Command enjoining Love. God hath a Good-will to all his Creatures; but that he ſhould make a Creature capable of loving him, and appoint this for his Command, Oh! herein his Goodneſs ſhines brighteſt. Now, though fallen from this, we are again invited to it; though degenerated and accurſed in our ſinful Nature, yet we are renewed in Chriſt, and this Command is renewed in him, and a new way of fulfilling it is pointed out.

This *Command is broad*; there is Room enough for the Soul in God, that is hamper'd and pinch'd in all other Things. Here, *love with all thy Soul, with all thy Mind*, &c. ſtretch it to the utmoſt; there is enough for it here, it muſt contract and draw itſelf to other Things. *I will walk at Liberty*, ſays *David*, *for I ſeek thy Precepts:* That which perverſe Nature judges Thraldom, once truly known, is only Freedom;

* *Si terram amas, terra es; ſi Deum amas, quid vis ut dicam, Deus es?* Aug.

dom; this becauſe the Law is Love, and ſuch a Love as brings full Content to the Soul. Man hath not an Object of Love beſide God; too many that can torment and trouble him, but not one that by being loved of him, ſatisfies and quiets him; whether he loves Things without him, or himſelf, ſtill he is pained and reſtleſs. All other Things he loves naturally, in reference to himſelf; but himſelf is not a ſufficient Object for him: It muſt be ſomething that adds to, and perfects his Nature, to which he muſt be united in Love, ſomewhat higher than himſelf, yea, the higheſt of all, the Father of Spirits, that alone compleats a Spirit and bleſſes it, to love him, the Spring of Spirits.

Now, this Love, as Obedience to his Commands, is a Thing in itſelf due, and expreſly commanded too. This is the Thing that ſurpaſſes all Purſuits, and all Enjoyments under Heaven, not only to be loved of God, but to love him; yea, could they be ſevered, this rather would be the Deformity and Miſery of the Creature, to hate him. This is the Hell of Hell.

And to love him, not only with Complacency, a Deſire to enjoy him; but, moreover, wiſhing him Glory, doing him Service, deſiring he may be honoured by all his Creatures, and endeavouring ourſelves to honour him; that is our Work, applauding the Praiſes of Angels and all Creatures, and adding ours, *Pſal.* ciii. 22. ſweet, willing, entire Submiſſion to his Will, ready to do, to ſuffer any thing for him. Oh! away all baſe muddy Pleaſures, all falſe Night Shows of earthly Glories, all high Attempts and heroick Virtues; theſe have their Meaſure and their Cloſe, and prove in the End but Lies. This Command, this Love alone, is the endleſs Perfection and Delight of Souls, that begins here, and is compleated above. The Happineſs of Glory is

the

the Perfection of Holineſs; that is the full Beauty and Lovelineſs of the Spouſe, the Lamb's Wife.

Oh! how much are the Multitudes of Men to be pitied, that are hunting they know not what, ſtill purſuing Content, and it ſtill flying before, and they at as great a Diſtance as when they promiſed themſelves to lay hold on it. It is ſtrange what Men are doing. *Ephraim feedeth on the Wind.* The moſt ſerious Deſigns of Men are more fooliſh than the Plays of Children; all the Difference is, that theſe are ſowrer and more ſad Trifles *.

Oh! that ye would turn this Way, and not ſtill lay out your *Money for that which is not Bread*, &c. You would find the ſaddeſt Part of a ſpiritual Courſe of Life hath under it more true Sweetneſs, than all your empty Mirths, that ſound much, and are nothing, like the *crackling of Thorns under the Pot:* There is more Joy in enduring a Croſs for God, than in the Smiles of the World; in a private deſpiſed Affliction, without the Name of ſuffering for his Cauſe, or any thing in it like Martyrdom, but only as coming from his Hand, kiſſing it, and bearing it patiently, yea, gladly for his Sake, out of Love to him becauſe it is his Will ſo to try thee, What can come amiſs to a Soul thus compoſed?

I wiſh that even they, who have renounced the vain World, and have the Faces of their Hearts turned God-wards, would learn more this happy Life, and enjoy it more, not to hang ſo much upon ſenſible Comforts, as to delight in Obedience, and to wait for thoſe at his Pleaſure, whether he gives much or little, any or none. Learn to be ſtill finding the Sweetneſs of his Commands, which no outward or inward Change can diſreliſh; rejoicing in the Actings of that Divine Love within thee: Continue thy Conflicts with Sin, and though thou may'ſt

* *Triſtes ineptiæ.*

may'ſt at Times be foiled, yet cry to him for Help; and getting up, redouble thy Hatred at it, and Attempts againſt it. Still ſtir this Flame of God, that will overcome: *Many Waters cannot quench it,* It is a renewed Pleaſure, to be offering up thyſelf every Day to God. Oh! the ſweeteſt Life in the World, to be croſſing thyſelf, to pleaſe him; trampling on thy own Will, to follow his.

SERMON IV.

HABAKKUK III. 17, 18.

Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom, neither ſhall Fruit be in the Vines; the Labour of the Olive ſhall fail, and the Fields ſhall yield no Meat; the Flock ſhall be cut off from the Fold, and there ſhall be no Herd in the Stalls.

Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my Salvation.

MOſt Mens Induſtries and Employments are moſt without them, but certainly our main and worthieſt Buſineſs lies within us; nor is ever a Man fit for the Varieties and Viciſſitudes of Time and Affairs without, till he have taken ſome Pains to ſome good Purpoſe within himſelf. A diſtempered diſcompoſed Mind is as a Limb out of Joint, which is fit for no Action, and moves both deformedly and painfully. That which we have to do, my Brethren, for which theſe our Meetings are commanded of God, and ſhould be attended by us, and that

we ſhould follow out, when we are gone from hence, is this, the reducing of our Souls to God: Their Diſunion from him is their Disjointing, and they are never right till they refix on him; and being there, they are ſo right, that nothing can come wrong to them. As they are not readily enſnared with Eaſe and Plenty, ſo neither lightly aſtoniſhed with Want and Trouble; but, in the Ebb of all other Comforts, can hold the Prophet's Purpoſe, *to joy in the Lord, and rejoice in the God of their Salvation.*

This we may hear and ſpeak of, but truly few attain it. I fear many of us are not ſo much as ſeeking after it, and aſpiring to it. A Soul really converſant with God is taken up with him; all its Affections work and move towards him, as the Prophet's here, his *Fear*, his *Joy*, his *Truſt*, *Ver.* 16, 17, 18, 19. This is a Prayer, as it is entituled, but it is both a prophetical and an unuſual one, a *Prophecy* and a *Song* (as the Word added imports) of *Habakkuk* the Prophet on *Neginoth*. The Strain of it is high, and full of ſudden Raptures and Changes, as that Word ſignifies: As here, having expreſt much Fear in the foregoing Words, a ſhivering trembling Horror, yet adds ſuch an Height of invincible Kind of Joy; as the Needle of the Compaſs fixedly looking towards him, yet not without a trembling Motion. Thus, we have the Temper of the Pſalmiſt, *rejoice with trembling*; which ſuits well to ſo ſublime an Object, joying in God, *becauſe he is good*; yet Joy ſtill mix'd with holy Awe, *becauſe he is great*: And this eſpecially in time of great Judgments, or in the lively Apprehenſions or Repreſentations of them, whether before or after their inflicting; whether they be on the People of God for their Iniquities, or on the Enemies of God for their Oppreſſions and Cruelties to his People, while he made them Inſtruments for their Correction. In both, God is formidable,

dable, and greatly to be feared, even by thoſe that are neareſt to him: This we find in the Prophets ſeeing Judgments afar off, long before their Day, which they had Commiſſion to denounce: So this Prophet here, not only diſcovers great Awe and Fear at what he ſaw and foretold concerning God's own People the *Jews*, but at the after-reckoning with the *Chaldeans*, his and their Enemies. When God comes to do Judgment on the Wicked, this will make them that ſtand by, and ſuffer not with them, yet to tremble; yea, ſuch as are advantaged by it, as uſually the People of God are, their Enemies Ruin proving their Deliverance. The Majeſty and Greatneſs of God, and Terribleneſs of his March towards them, and ſeizing on them, as it is here highly ſet forth, this works an awful Fear in the Hearts of his own Children, they cannot ſee their Father angry but it makes them quake, though it be not againſt them, but on their Behalf. And this were our right Temper, when we ſee or hear of the Hand of God againſt wicked Men, that run their own Courſes againſt all Warning, not to entertain theſe Things with carnal Rejoicings and Lightneſs of Mind, or with boaſting Inſultations; to applaud indeed the Righteouſneſs of God, and to give him his Glory; but withal, to fear before him, though they were Strangers, and no way a Part of ourſelves, and to have a humble Senſe of the Lord's dealing in it; ſo, *Pſal.* lii. 6. and to learn to reverence God, *in all our Ways to acknowledge him*; to be ſure to take him along with us, and to undertake nothing without him.

And this Fear of Judgments in others, is the Way not to feel them on ourſelves. When God ſees that the Sound of the Rod on others Backs will humble a Soul or a People, he will ſpare the Stroke of it. They that have moſt of this holy Fear of God's An-

ger, fall leaſt under the Dint of it. *Bleſſed is he that feareth always; but he that hardens his Heart, ſhall fall into Miſchief.* He that fears it not, ſhall fall into it; he that fears and trembles at it, ſhall eſcape: So the Prophet here truſts for himſelf, *I trembled in myſelf, that I might reſt in the Day of Trouble*, Ver. 16. and, upon his Confidence, ariſes to this high Reſolution.

The Words, to make no other Diviſion of them, are a Conjuncture of a *ſad Suppoſition*, and a *chearful Poſition* or *Purpoſe*.

Although the Fig-tree, &c. This is a Thing that may come, and, poſſibly, that the Prophet did foreſee would come, amongſt other Judgments, and it is of all other outward Scourges the ſoreſt, moſt ſmarting, and moſt ſweeping, cuts off moſt People, and can leaſt be ſuffered and ſhifted. It lieth amongſt the reſt in the Store-houſe of divine Judgments; he that furniſh'd the Earth, and gave Being by the Word of his Mouth to all theſe Things, hath ſtill the ſole abſolute Power of them; they obey his Word of Command; and rightly look'd upon, in our Uſe of them, and the Sweetneſs we find in them, lead us to him, as the Spring of Being and Goodneſs. He is inviſible in his Nature, in his Works moſt viſible and legible; not only the ſpacious Heavens and glorious Lights in them, but the meaneſt Things on Earth, every Plant and Flower in their Being and Growing, yea, every Pile of Graſs, declare God to us.

And 'tis ſupernatural Delight in natural Things, to ſee and taſte him in them, 'tis more pleaſant than their natural Reliſh: 'Tis the chief inner Sweetneſs, the Kernel and Marrow of all, and they that take not the Pains, and have not the Skill to draw it forth, loſe the far better Half of their Enjoyments, even of the Things of this Earth. To think how wiſe he is that deviſed ſuch a Frame, how

powerful

powerful that made all theſe Things, how rich he muſt be that ſtill continues to furniſh the Earth with theſe Varieties of Proviſions; how ſweet muſt he be, whence all theſe Things draw their Sweetneſs? But, alas! we are brutiſh, and in our Uſe of theſe Things we differ little or nothing from the Beaſt. We are called to a higher Life, but we live it not. *Man is in Honour, but he underſtands it not; he is as the Beaſt that periſhes.* Now, becauſe we acknowledge God ſo little in the Uſe of theſe Things, therefore he is put to it, (ſo to ſpeak) to teach us our Leſſon, in the Want and Deprivement of them, which our Dulneſs is more ſenſible of. We know Things a great deal better by wanting them than by having them, and take more Notice of that Hand that hath Power of them, when he withdraws, than when he beſtows them.

Beſides all other Provocations and particular Abuſes of theſe Things in Intemperance and Luxury, were it no more but the very diſacknowledging of God, the Inobſervance of his Goodneſs; this calls for a Famine, to diet us into wiſer Thoughts, and remember us of our own and all other Creatures Dependance on that God whom we ſo forgot, as to ſerve our Idols and baſe Luſts upon his Bounty. This was the Caſe of *Judah* and *Iſrael*, *Hoſ.* ii. 8, 13. but when more ſparingly fed, and better taught in the Wilderneſs, theſe were reſtored again, *Ver.* 14, 15. then all acknowledge the Dowry of that bleſſed Marriage with himſelf, *Ver.* 16. which is ſo far beyond all Account.

How wretched Ingratitude is it, not to regard and love him in the Uſe of all his Mercies; but horrid Stupidity, not to conſider, and ſeek to him in their Withdrawment, or the threatning of it. Few have a right Senſe of his Hand in any thing; they grumble and cry out, but not to him, as of Oppreſſion,

ſion, *Job* xxxv. 9, 10. So of this very Judgment Famine, *Hoſ.* vii. 14. *Ephraim howled, and cried to me*, did not humbly and repentingly ſeek to me by Prayer; but a natural brutiſh Senſe of their Wants preſs'd out Complaints; they howled, as a hungry Dog would do for Bread: This is all the moſt do, in Years of Dearth, or Harveſts threatening it. No Beaſt in the Mountain or Wilderneſs is ſo untamed as the Heart of Man, which, when catched in God's Judgments, lies and cries as a wild Bull in a Net. 'Tis true, they are ſomewhat nearer ſober Thoughts in Diſtreſs and Grief, though natural, yet nearer ſpiritual Grief, than their Mirth and Laughter; but it muſt have a Touch of that Spirit above, to make it ſpiritual, to make it change to Gold, to turn it to godly Sorrow. No Scourge carries a Power of changing the Heart with it; that is a ſuperadded Work. Many People, and particular Perſons, have been beat as in a Mortar with Variety of Afflictions, one coming thick upon another, and yet are never the wiſer, and yet *have not returned unto me, ſaith the Lord.*

Therefore, if you be afflicted, join Prayer with your Correction; and beg by it, that God would join his Spirit with it: Seek this in earneſt, elſe you ſhall be not a whit the better, but ſhall ſtill endure the Smart, and not reap the Fruit thereof; yea, I believe, ſome are the worſe, even by falſly imagining they are better, partly preſuming it muſt be ſo, and partly, may be, feeling ſome preſent Motions and Meltings in the Time of Afflictions, which evaniſh and preſently cool when they are off the Fire: Ay, but theſe two together make a happy Man; *Bleſſed is he whom thou correcteſt, and teacheſt out of thy Law.*

Although the Fig-tree ſhall not bloſſom.] This ſometimes does, and at any Time may befal a Land; but how-

however, it is very uſeful to put ſuch Caſes. 'Tis true, there is great Odds betwixt real and imagined Diſtreſſes; yet certainly the frequent viewing of its Picture, though it is no more in thy Imagination, hath ſo much Likeneſs, as ſomewhat abates the Strangeneſs and Frightfulneſs of its true Viſage, when it comes.

There is a fooliſh Pre-apprehenſion of poſſible Evils, that, whether they come or no, does no Good, but makes Evils to come perplexingly before-hand, and ante-dates their Miſery, and adds the Pain of many others that will never come: Theſe are the Fumes of a dark diſtempering Humour, vain Fears, that vex and trouble ſome Minds in preſent, and do not waſte any thing of any Grief to come after. But calmly and compoſedly to ſit down and conſider evil Days coming, any kind of Trials that probably, yea, or poſſibly, may arrive, ſo as to be ready to entertain them without Aſtoniſhment; this is a wiſe and uſeful Exerciſe of thy Mind, and takes off much of the Weight of ſuch Things, breaks them in falling on us, that they come not ſo ſad down, when they light firſt upon the Apprehenſion. Thus, it is true, nothing comes unawares to a wiſe Man; he hath ſuppoſed all, or as bad as any thing that can come, hath acquainted his Mind with the horrideſt Shapes, and therefore, when ſuch Things appear, will not ſo readily ſtart at them.

This I would adviſe to be done, not only in Things we can more eaſily ſuffer, but thoſe we think would prove hardeſt and moſt indigeſtible, to inure thy Heart to them; not to be, as ſome, ſo tender-fancied, that they dare not ſo much as think of ſome Things, the Death of a dear Friend, or Husband, or Wife, or Child, that is oftner to be viewed rather than any other Event: Bring thy Mind to it, as a ſtarting Horſe to that whereat it does moſt

ſtartle.

ſtartle at. What if I ſhould be bereſt of ſuch a Perſon, ſuch a Thing; this would make it much more tolerable when thou art put to it. What if the Place where I live were viſited with all at once in ſome Degree, Peſtilence, and Sword, and Famine? How would I look on them? Could my Mind keep its own Place and Stance, fix'd on God in ſuch a Caſe? What if I were turned out of my good Furniture and warm Houſe, and ſtript not only of acceſſory but neceſſary Things; as here he ſuppoſes, not only the failing of Delicacies, the Fig-trees, Wine and Olives, but of common neceſſary Food: the Fields not yielding Meat, and the Flocks cut off; thy little ones crying for Bread, and thou haſt none for them: You little know what the tendereſt and delicateſt among you may be put to. Theſe Times have given many real Inſtances within theſe Kingdoms, of ſtrange Changes in the Condition of all Ranks of Perſons: Or, think if that thou abhorreſt that, what if I were ſmitten with Botches or loathſome Sores on my Fleſh; or if by any Accident I ſhould loſe an Arm, or an Eye, or both Eyes? What if extreme Poverty, and Sickneſs, and forſaking of Friends, come all at once? Could I welcome theſe, and make up all in God, find Riches, and Friends, and Fulneſs in him? Moſt Men, if they would ſpeak truly to ſuch Caſes, muſt declare them unſufferable. I were undone, if ſuch a thing befel me, or ſuch a Comfort were taken from me, moſt would cry out, as *Micah* did, *Judg.* xvii. *They have taken away my Gods*, &c. for ſo are theſe Things; our Hearts cleave to, and principally joy in them. He that worſhips Mammon, his Purſe is the ſenſibleſt Piece of him; he is broke, if Fire, or other Ravage of War, throw him out of his Neſt, and empty it. He that makes his *Belly his God*, (ſuch they are the Apoſtle ſpeaks of) how could he endure this Caſe the

Prophet

Prophet puts here, the failing of Vines, of Flocks and Herds?

It were good to add to the Suppoſe of Want ſomewhat of the Reality of it; ſometime to abridge thyſelf of Things thou deſireſt and loveſt; to inure thy Appetite to a Refuſal of what it calls for; to practiſe ſomewhat of Poverty; to learn to need few Things, &c.

'Tis ſtrange Men ſhould be ſo fooliſh as to ty themſelves to theſe Things, that have neither ſatisfying Content in them, nor certain Abode. And why ſhould'ſt thou ſet thy Heart *on Things which are not*, ſays *Solomon*, a *non-ens*, a Fancy? How ſoon may you be parted? He that is the true God, God alone, how ſoon can he pull theſe falſe Gods from you, or you from them? as in that Word, *Job* xxvii. 8. *What is the Hope of the Hypocrite that he hath gained, when God takes away his Soul?* Like that Caſe in the Parable, *Luke* xii. 19. *Soul, take thy Reſt:* A ſtrange Inference from full Barns! That was ſufficient Proviſion for a Horſe, a fit Happineſs for him: But for a Soul, though it were to ſtay, how groſs and baſe a Portion? but it cannot ſtay neither, *This Night thy Soul ſhall be required of thee*, &c.

The only firm Poſition is this of the Prophet, *Yet will I rejoice in the Lord.* And ſuch Times indeed are fit to give Proof of this; to tell thee, whether it be ſo indeed, where thy Heart is built. While thy Honour, and Wealth, and Friends are about thee, it is hard to know whether theſe Stoops bear thee up, or another inviſible Supporter; but when theſe are pluck'd away, and thou art denuded round about, then it will appear, if thy Strength be in God, if theſe other Things were but Flouriſhes about thee, and thou laidſt no Weight on them at all; he that leans on theſe, muſt fall when theſe fall, and his *Hope is cut off*; and his *Truſt as a*

Spider's Web. He ſhall lean upon his Houſe, but it ſhall not ſtand, &c. Job viii. 14, 15. They that clap their Hearts about their Houſes or Eſtates, within a while they are either ſadly pulled aſunder, or ſwept away together.

But, Oh! the bleſs'd, the high Condition of a Soul ſet on God, untied, independent from all Things beſide him; its whole Dependence and Reſt placed on him alone, ſitting looſe to all the World, and ſo not ſtirred with Alterations: Yea, the Turnings upſide-down of human Things, if the Frame of the Heaven and Earth were falling to pieces *, the Heart founded on him that made it abides unmoved, *the everlaſting Arms are under* it, and bear it up.

Do ye believe, my Brethren, that there is ſuch a thing, that it is no Fancy? Yea, all is but Fancy beſide it. Do you believe? Why then is one Day after another put off, and this not attained, nor the Soul ſo much as entred or engaged to a ſerious Endeavour after it, looking on all Things elſe, compared to this noble Deſign, as Vanity? How often and eaſily are their Joys damp'd, that rejoice in other Things, their Hopes broken, and what they expected moſt, ſoon proves a Lie? As the Word ſpoken of the *Olive* here ſignifies, as if the *Labour* of it ſhould *lie* †, a fair Vintage or Harveſt promiſed, and either withered with Drought, or drowned with Rain; indeed Lies at the beſt. But the Soul that places its Joy on God, is ſtill freſh and green, when all are withered about it. *Jer.* xvii. 6, 7. *Acquaint thyſelf with him* betimes in Eaſe. It is a ſad Caſe, to be to make Acquaintance with him, when thou ſhould'ſt moſt make Uſe of his Friendſhip, and find Comfort in his Love.

Now,

* *Si fractus illabatur orbis,*
† *Spem mentita ſeges.*

Now, this Joy in God cannot remain in an impure unholy Soul, no more than Heaven and Hell can mix together. An impure unholy Soul I call not that that is ſtained with Sin, for no other are under the Sun, all muſt then quite all Pretenſions to that Eſtate; but ſuch an one as willingly entertains and delights in any ſinful Luſt or Way of Wickedneſs; that Delight and this is directly oppoſite. And certainly the more the Soul is refin'd from all Delights of Sin, yea, even from ſinleſs Delights of Senſe and of this preſent World, it hath the more Capacity, the fitter and the larger Room for this pure heavenly Delight.

No Language can make a natural Man underſtand what this Thing is, to *rejoice in God:* Oh! it is a Myſtery. Moſt mind poor childiſh Things, laughing and crying at a Breath at Trifles, eaſily puff'd up, and as eaſily caſt down. But even the Children of God are too little acquainted with this their Portion. Which of you find this Power in the Remembrance of God, that it doth overflow and drown all other Things, both your worldly Joys and worldly Sorrows, that you find them not? And thus it would be, if we knew him. Is he then our Father, and yet we know him not?

Although all fail, yet rejoice in him that fails not, that alters not. He is ſtill the ſame in himſelf, and to the Senſe of the Soul that is knit to him; then ſweeteſt, when the World is bittereſt: When other Comforts are withdrawn, the Loſs of them brings this great Gain, ſo much the more of God, and his Love imparted, to make all up. They that ever found this, could almoſt wiſh for Things that others are afraid of. If we knew how to improve them, his ſharpeſt Viſits would be his ſweeteſt; thou would'ſt be glad to catch a Kiſs of his Hand, while he is beating thee, or pulling away ſomething from

thee that thou loveſt, and bleſs him while he is doing ſo.

Rejoice in God, although the Fig-tree bloſſom not, &c. yea, rejoice in theſe hardeſt Things, as his Doing. A Heart rejoicing in him, delights in all his Will, and is ſurely provided to the moſt firm Joy in all Eſtates: For if nothing can come to paſs beſide or againſt his Will, then cannot that Soul be vexed that delights in him, and hath no Will but his, but follows him in all Times, in all Eſtates; not only when he ſhines bright on them, but when they are clouded. That Flower that follows the Sun, doth ſo even in cloudy Days; when it doth not ſhine forth, yet it follows the hidden Courſe and Motion of it: So the Soul that moves after God, keeps that Courſe when he hides his Face, is content, yea, is glad at his Will in all Eſtates, or Conditions, or Events. And though not only all be withered and blaſted without, but the Face of the Soul little better within to Senſe, no flouriſhing of Graces for the preſent, yet rejoices in him, and in that everlaſting Covenant that ſtill holds, *ordered in all Things and ſure*, as the ſweet Singer of *Iſrael* ſweetly expreſſes it, 2 *Sam.* xxv. 5. *For this*, ſays he, *is all my Salvation, and all my Deſire, ALTHOUGH he make it not to grow*: That is a ſtrange *Although*, and yet is he ſatisfied even in that.

This Joy in God, as *my God, the [illegible] of my Salvation*, ought to exerciſe the Soul in the darkeſt and worſt Times, and ought to ſtick to it, not to let go this Confidence; ſtill expecting Salvation from him, and reſting on him for it, though not having theſe Senſes and Aſſurances that thou deſireſt. This weak Believers are eaſily beaten from by Temptation; but we are to ſtand to our Right in him, even when we ſee it not: And when it is ſaid to thee, as *Pſal.* iii. that *there is no Help for thee in God*, tell all that ſay

ſo,

ſo, they lie, *He is my God, my Glory, and the Lifter up of my Head*, as here he ſpeaks.

Rejoice in him ſtill as thy God; and, however, rejoice in him as God. I will rejoice in *Jehovah*, glad that he is God, that his Enemies cannot unſettle nor reach his Throne; that he rules, and is glorious in all Things; that he is ſelf-bleſſed, and needs nothing: This is the pureſt and higheſt kind of Rejoicing in him, and is certainly moſt diſtant and moſt free from Alteration, and hath, indeed, moſt of Heaven in it.

SERMON V.

1 Cor. I. 30.

But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.

THE great Deſign of the Goſpel is to bring Men to Jeſus Chriſt; and, next to that, to inſtruct thoſe that are brought to him in the cleareſt Knowledge, and to keep them in the freſh Remembrance of the Privileges and Happineſs they have in him. This the Apoſtles, writing to new Converts, are much on, and *Paul* moſt abundantly; but no where more excellently and fully than in theſe Words.

As that is a great and much commended Oracle, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν *(Know thyſelf)* ſo alſo there can be nothing more comfortable and profitable for a Chriſtian than this Point, to underſtand his new Being,

ing, to know himſelf as out of himſelf in Chriſt, to ſtudy what he is there. Oh! what Joy, what Humility, what Holineſs would it work, were we well ſeen and much converſant in this Subject, viewing ourſelves in this Light, as here the Apoſtle repreſents a Believer to himſelf, *Of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus*, &c.

If we look back a little, we ſee his Aim is to vindicate the Doctrine of Chriſt from Contempt in that chief Point, which is the greateſt Comfort and Glory; yet lies openeſt to the World's Miſpriſion, the Doctrine of the Croſs, Chriſt crucified. Him we preach, ſays he, let Men take it as they pleaſe; be he *a Stumbling to the Jews*, and *Fooliſhneſs to the Gentiles*, yet, *to them that believe* in both, he is *the Power of God*, and *Wiſdom of God*.

As in the Perſon of Chriſt, Glory was wrapt up in Meanneſs; ſo in his Sufferings and Death, and the Doctrine of it, (and in the way of preaching it) they are not dreſt with *human Wiſdom*, or *Excellency of Speech*, (this would be as incongruous as that rich gaudy Attire they cover the Image of the Virgin with, and her Child lying in a Stable) and that all might be ſuitable, ſo is it in the Perſons of theſe that believe on him. *Brethren, you ſee your Calling*, &c. and God's Purpoſe in this is, *that no Fleſh ſhould glory before him*.

This is the grand Diſeaſe of Fleſh, to ſwell in Conceit of any little Advantages, real or imagined, forgetting itſelf and him from whom it receives all, receives its very ſelf, the Being it hath, and all ſuperadded Good. Now, God is pleaſed, in Juſtice on ſome, and great Mercy to others, ſo to order moſt Things in the World, as to allay this Tumour; often bringing down high Things, and raiſing low; and ſo attempering and levelling Diſparities, as to take Men off from Self-glorying. Proud Undertakings,

we

we ſee, are commonly moſt diſgraceſully broken. Nor is there any ſurer Preſage of the ſpeedy Ruin of any Affairs or Perſons, than preſumptuous Boaſting. This is God's Work amongſt Men, as even natural Men have obſerved, to abaſe high Things, to exalt low Things; he goes from one Thing to another, pulling down the Creſt, and blaſting the Glory of all human Excellency, breaking the likelieſt Projects, and effecting what is leaſt to be expected, withdrawing Man from his Purpoſe, to hide Pride from his Eyes, as he ſpeaks, *Job* xxxiii. 17. To this Purpoſe, *Job* x. 11, 12. 1 *Sam.* ii. 4, 5. and the Virgin in her Song, *Luke* i. 51, 52. Whatſoever Men bear themſelves big upon, and begin to glory in, they call the Hand of God to cruſh it, raiſing an Idol of Jealouſy in his Sight. All high Things have their Day, the Day of the Lord on all the Cedars of *Lebanon*, and he alone exalted. If ever this was the Caſe in any Time, we may ſee it is legible in ours, in great Letters. This the very Reſult of his Ways, ſtaining the Pride of all Glory, defeating witty Counſels, making Counſellors mad, throwing down all Plumes and trampling them in the Mire, that no Part or Perſons in the Kingdom can ſet out for any Triumph of Courage, or Wit, or any other Excellency, but ſomewhat ſhall be clearly ſeen to meet and daſh it in pieces, that *no Fleſh may glory before him:* And this to Souls that love God, is the main Happineſs of the Times, and that wherein they will chiefly rejoice.

The Particular here ſpoken of is eminently ſuited to this End, the Choice and calling of Perſons to the Dignity of Chriſtians, *not many wiſe*, &c. but *the mean Things*, &c. and the moſt inſignificant, *Things that are not*, *non-entia*, very Nothings, to annul Things that ſeem moſt to be Something. Thus it was in the firſt Times; and though afterwards, by means

means of theſe meaner Perſons, greater were caught and drawn in to Chriſt, Philoſophers and Kings, &c. yet ſtill it remains true in all Times, that, predominantly, the Choice is of the meaner Sort, God teſtifying how little he eſteems theſe Things that Men count great, theſe Endowments of Wit and Eloquence that Men admire in ſome: Alas! how poor are they to him; he reſpecteth not any who are wiſe in Heart; they are nothing, and leſs than nothing in his Eyes: He is the Author of all theſe, *Job* xxxiv. 19. (Even wiſe Men admire how little it is that Men know, how ſmall a Matter lies under the Sound of theſe popular Wonders, a learned Man, a great Scholar, a great Stateſman: How much more doth the All-wiſe God meanly account of theſe; he often diſcovers, even to the World, their Meanneſs; he befools them.) So, Valour, or Birth, or worldly Greatneſs, theſe he gives, and gives as Things he makes no great reckoning of, to ſuch as ſhall never ſee his Face; and calls to the Inheritance of Glory poor deſpiſed Creatures, that are look'd on as the *Offſcourings* and Refuſe of the World; thoſe are *raiſed from the Dunghill* and *ſet with Princes*, made *the Sons and Daughters of God*, entitled each of them to *a Crown that fades not*. Oh the Wonder!

Now, they are not puft up with this; but the more Aſſurance they have, and the clearer their View is of the State they are called to, the more humble they are; ſtill laying theſe together, what was I in myſelf? and, what am I in Chriſt? And, in comparing theſe, they are ſwallowed up with Amazement at that Love that made this Change; and for this very End doth the Apoſtle expreſs thus their Eſtate, *Ye are of him in Chriſt Jeſus*, &c.

This is a new Being, a Creation; for, in relation to this Being, we are nothing in our *Naturals*; and then

then conſidering that, in relation to others, the meaneſt are often choſen and made Partakers of this Being, that having nothing naturally great of Nobility or Morality, or high Intellectuals, the moſt Nothings are often choſen, and made Partakers of this Being, to illuſtrate the Power of him that makes them exiſt. In Kings, ſomewhat may be obſerved of this in their Choice of Favourites, and raiſing Men that are not of higheſt deſerving, as affecting to ſhew their Freedom in Choice, and their Power in making out of nothing, and ſo they love to have them called their Creatures; but theſe are but Shadows, both are poor Creatures, both are eaſily thrown down: But God doth indeed ſhew in his Choice his Freedom and Power in his new Creature; he draws them out of the loweſt Bottom of Nothing, and raiſes them to the moſt excellent kind of Being that Creatures are capable of, to be *the Sons of God, and ſo Heirs, joint Heirs with Chriſt Jeſus*, &c.

Ye are of him in Chriſt Jeſus, &c. This muſt be taken in an eminent Senſe. All the Creatures are *of God*; but Man, even in his firſt Creation, for the Dignity of his Being, and ſlow Way of forming, was accounted to be *of God*, in a peculiar manner, formed to his own Likeneſs, and therefore called *the Son of God*, Acts xvii. called *his Offspring*. But in this new Being much more are we ſo; *we are of him* as his Children, Partakers of the Divine Nature, and that ſo faſtned, that it abideth: And the Medium of this excellent and permanent Being is primely to be conſidered; for in him it becomes ſo. It is both high and firm, being in the natural Son, as the Foundation of it; therefore here expreſt, as bearing the whole Weight of this happy Fabrick.

Of him ye are in Chriſt Jeſus, &c. The Life which Believers derive from God is through him; he is that eternal Word, by which all Things were made,

in their firſt Creation, and do ſtill ſubſiſt, *Heb.* i. *John* i. And he is made the Baſis of the ſecond Creation, in a wonderful Way, becoming himſelf a Creature; and ſo the Root of the new Progeny is from Heaven, *the Sons of God:* So it follows in both theſe cited Scriptures, *John* i. 12, 13, 14. *the Word was made Fleſh*; and ſo they that receive him are made the Sons of God. And ſo, *Heb.* ii. 10, 11, &c. amply and excellently is that Myſtery unfolded. The firſt Frame of Man, at leaſt, the Excellency and Beauty of it, was broken by his Fall; therefore a new Model is framed of a ſelected Number, to be a new World, more firm than the former, united unto God ſo cloſe, as never to be ſevered again. Man, though he was made holy and God-like, continued not in that Honour. Now, God himſelf becomes a Man, to make all ſure, that is the Foundation of an indiſſoluble Union. Man is knit to God in the Perſon of Chriſt ſo cloſe, that there is no Poſſibility of dividing them any more; and this Union of our Nature in his Perſon is made the Ground of the Union of our Perſons with God. We find our own Fleſh in Chriſt catch hold of a Man, and in that may find God, and are made one with him by Faith in Chriſt; and this all the Powers of Hell cannot diſſolve. Our Life none can cut off from his, more than a Man can cut a Beam from off the Sun. We are and ſubſiſt of God in Chriſt. This is an unknown Myſtery, but, were it known, would prove a Depth of rich inexhauſtible Conſolation. The World doth not know what Chriſtians are: This is no Wonder; for truly they know not themſelves, or but very little. How would it elevate their Spirits, but not in Pride. Oh! nothing is more humbling than this, as the Apoſtle here implies; but it would raiſe them above the World, and ſuit their Deſires and their Actions to their Condition, having all under Foot, that the World accounts great;

great; walking as Heirs of Heaven, led and moved by the Spirit of Chriſt in them; thinking, when ſolicited to any baſe Way, how doth this become the Sons of God? Shall one that lives in Chriſt indignify him ſo much, as to borrow Comfort or Pleaſure from any Sin, for the Killing and Deſtruction whereof he laid down his precious Life.

Oh! my Brethren, that this Divine Ambition were kindled in your Breaſts, to partake of this high and happy Being, and leave all your Purſuits to follow this, reſtleſs till you be in Chriſt: For ſolid abiding Reſt, ſure I am, out of him there is none; and then, being in him, remember where you are, and what you are. *Walk in Chriſt*, and live like him, as one with him indeed; let his Thoughts and Deſires be yours. What was his Work, yea, what his Refreſhment, his Meat and Drink? To do his Father's Will. Oh! when ſhall we find ourſelves ſo minded, as the Apoſtle's Word is, *the ſame Mind in us that was in Chriſt.*

Who of God is made unto us Wiſdom, &c.] *Known unto God are all his Works from the Beginning.* It was not an accidental After-Device in God, (for in him there can be no ſuch thing) but was his great forethought Project, out of the Ruins of Man's firſt Eſtate to raiſe a fairer and firmer Fabrick, new from the very Foundation. And in the new Foundation lies the Model and Excellency and Stability of the whole Structure. This is the Choice of all his Works, wherein he chiefly glories, his Maſter-piece, which great Angels admire; and this is it, *Who of God is made unto us Wiſdom*, &c. and that is one Letter of his Name. He is called *Wonderful*, that is here ſpoke of; ſo all is wonderful in this Work: *Wonderful*, firſt, that he ſhould be made any thing, the Maker of all things himſelf made ſomething that before he was not, then *made to us.* That he ſhould be made any thing, to our Intereſt and Advantage, who are a

Company of Traitors, and *made unto us of God*, the God againſt whom we rebelled, and continued naturally Enemies. The Purpoſe bred in the Father's own Breaſt, to give out his Son from thence to recover us, and bring us back. O! aſtoniſhing Depth of Love! Then *made unto us*. What? What not? We made up in him, for ever rich and happy: He made all unto us, all we need, or can deſire, *Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.* Without him we are undone, forlorn Caitiffs, Maſſes of Miſery, as you ſay, having nothing neither *in us nor on us*; nothing but Poverty and Wretchedneſs, Blindneſs and Nakedneſs, altogether ignorant of the Way to Happineſs, yea, ignorant of our very Miſery; a Neſt of Fools, natural Fools, Children of Folly, (as they that are renewed by and provided with this Wiſdom, are called *Children of Wiſdom*) guilty, filthy, condemned Slaves.

This is the goodly Poſture we are in, out of Chriſt; yet, who reſents it? How few can be brought to ſerious Thoughts about it? Nay, are not the moſt in the Midſt of this Miſery yet full of high Conceit of their Worth, Wit, Freedom, *&c.* As frantick Bedlamites, lying naked and filthy in their Chains, yet dreaming they are great and wiſe Perſons, commanding and ordering all about them, poſſibly, that they are Kings, a Stick in their Hands a Scepter, and their Iron Chains of Gold. This is a pleaſing Madneſs for the Time; yet who does not pity it that looks on?

Methinks I ſee one of this Sort, when I ſee one evidently deſtitute of Chriſt, bearing himſelf big upon the Fancy of his Parts, and Birth, and Riches, or Stoutneſs, and upon any croſs Word ſwelling againſt others, threatning high, and proteſting they will be Slaves to none; not knowing that, even while they ſpeak thus, they are wretched Caitiffs, under

under the hardeſt and baſeſt kind of Slavery. Enquire, my Brethren, if ever you had a right and clear View of your natural Miſery, otherwiſe you are, 'tis likely, ſtill in it: And though you profeſs to believe in Chriſt, are not yet gone out of yourſelves to him; and not knowing your great Need of him, do certainly make little Eſteem and little Uſe of him. *You are full, and reign without him:* All is well and in quiet; but 'tis the *ſtrong Man* yet poſſeſſing the Houſe, and keeping you Captives as quiet as he can, that you look not out, or cry for a Deliverer: He is afraid of him, to be diſpoſſeſſed and turned out by him that is ſtronger, the mighty Redeemer that came out of *Zion*. Oh! that many amongſt you were crying to him, and waiting for him, to come unto you for your Reſcue.

Made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption.] To ſupply and help all, he is our Magazine, whither to have Recourſe to; for this End repleniſh'd with *all the Fulneſs of God*, the very *Fulneſs of the Godhead dwelling in him*; *the Spirit not given to him by Meaſure*. He is fit to be *made our Wiſdom*; *the Wiſdom of the Father*, as here in this Place the Apoſtle lately called him, *the Wiſdom of God. In him are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge*. They that find him, and come in to him, find it ſo; but the moſt look but on the Superfice, they hear his Name, and know not what is under it.

Righteouſneſs.] By fulfilling the whole Law, and all Righteouſneſs, *Matth.* iii. and yet ſuffering the Rigour of it, as if he had tranſgreſſed it: No Guile, no Spot was found on him; he was *holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from Sinners*, and yet the greateſt Sinner by Imputation, *(white and ruddy) he laid on him the Iniquity of us all.* And *Pſal.* xl. which is propheſied of him, *Mine Iniquities have taken hold on me*; he

he owns them as *his*, though *not his*, and *endured all that Juſtice could require*, enter'd and paid the Debt, and is acquitted and ſet free again, and *exalted at the Right Hand of God*. So 'tis evident that he is *righteous*, even in that *repreſentative* and *ſponſional Perſon* he put on.

Sanctification.] Chriſt is a living Spring of that, *anointed above his Fellows*. In him is no Mixture of any Iniquity. The Holy Ghoſt deſcended on the Apoſtles in *the Shape of Fire:* There was ſomewhat to be purged in them; they are to be quickned and enabled by it for their Calling: But in him, *as a Dove*, there was no need of cleanſing or purging out any thing; that was a Symbol of the ſpotleſs Purity of his Nature, and of the Fulneſs of the Spirit dwelling in him.

And Redemption.] Chriſt is mighty to ſave, and having Right to ſave, a *Kinſman*, a *Brother*; and as he hath bought Freedom for Sinners, will put them in Poſſeſſion of it, will effect and compleat it: All that are in him are really delivered from the Power of Sin and Death, and ſhall, e're long, be perfectly and fully ſo; they ſhall be lifted up above them, no longer to be moleſted with any Remainders of either, or with Fear of them, or ſo much as any Grief for them. And that Day is called *the Day of Redemption*, to which we are before-hand made ſure, and ſealed by the Spirit.

We cannot then doubt of his Fitneſs and Fulneſs to be theſe, *and theſe for us*; but withal, we muſt know that he is deſigned ſo to be *made unto us*, and came, and did, and ſuffered all for this Purpoſe; and having done, returned, and now lives, *to be theſe to us*. 'Tis his Place and Office, and ſo his Delight; he loves to be put upon the Performance of this, to be their *Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs*, *made of God to us*. 'Tis agreed betwixt the Father and him that he be

ſo:

ſo: He is *the Wiſdom of God*, and *made of God our Wiſdom*. Wonderful! that the ſame that is *his own Wiſdom*, and no leſs, he would *make ours*. And now, in a Senſe of all our Ignorances and Follies, it becomes us to go to him, to apply ourſelves to him, and apply him to us. He is called *our Head*, and ſo moſt fitly, for it is the Place of all our Wiſdom, that lies in our Head. And all the reſt, *Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption:* If he be *Righteouſneſs* in himſelf, and holy, and Victor over his Enemies, and ſet free from Wrath and Death; then are we ſo too in him, for he is *ours*, and ſo *ours*, that we become what he is, are inrighted to all he hath, and endowed with all his Goods; though poor and baſe in ourſelves, yet married to him, that is the Title: We are made rich, and noble, and free: We are righteous and holy, becauſe he is. * *The Wife ſhines with the Rays of her Husband.* All Debts and Pleas are taken off, he ſtands betwixt us and all Hazard, and in him we ſtand acquitted and juſtified before God.

That that makes up the Match, and ties the Knot of this Union, is Faith, *He is made of God unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs*, &c. tendered and held out as all theſe, in the Promiſe of the Goſpel; not only declared to be really furniſhed and fit ſo to be, but offered to be ſo, and we warranted, yea, invited and intreated to receive him as ſuch; but he is effectually *made* to be this *to us, to me*, by believing, brought home and applied of God, and Faith wrought in the Heart to entertain and unite to him; † it cloſes the Bargain, and makes him *ours*. Now, in that he is *made unto us*, not *of ourſelves*, but *God*, for that is his Gift and Work, we cannot believe more than we can fulfil the whole Law; and though Men think it

* *Uxor fulget radiis mariti.*

† Ἡ πίστις ἑνοποιεῖ.

it a common and eaſy Thing to accept of ſo ſweet an Offer at ſo cheap a Rate, nothing being required but to receive him; yet this is a Thing that naturally all refuſe: *No Man comes*, (ſays he) *except the Father draw him.* Though Men be beſeech'd to come, yet the moſt *will not come unto me that they may have Life. To as many as received him, he gave the Privilege to become the Sons of God:* And yet for all that, many did not receive him; yea, as there it is expreſſed, *He came to his own, but his own received him not.* They that were neareſt to him in natural Relation and Intereſt, yet refuſed him, for the moſt part, and attained not this bleſſed ſpiritual Intereſt in him unto Life.

It would be conſidered, my Brethren, Chriſt is daily held out, and none are excluded or excepted, all are invited, be what they will, that have Need of him, and Uſe for him; and yet who is perſuaded? Oh! *Who hath believed our Report?* One hath his *Farm*, another his *Oxen*, each ſome Divertiſement or another. Men are not at Leiſure for Chriſt. Why? you think, may be, you have received him. If it be ſo, you are happy. Be not deluded. Have you received him? Do you find him then living and ruling within you? Are your Eyes upon him? Do you wait on him, early and late, to ſee what his Will is? Is your Soul glad in him? Can you, in Diſtreſs, Sickneſs, or Poverty, claſp to him, and find him ſweet, and allay all with this Thought, "How-"ever Things go with me, yet Chriſt is in me?" Doth your Heart cleave to him? Certainly, if he be in you, it will be thus; or, at leaſt, your moſt earneſt Deſire will be, that it may be thus.

Men will not believe how hard a Matter it is to believe the Fulneſs and Sufficiency of Jeſus Chriſt, till they be put to it in earneſt to make Uſe of him; and then they find it, when Sin and Death are ſet be-

before their View, and diſcovered in their native Horridneſs unto the Soul, when a Man is driven to that, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved?* Then, then is the Time to know what Notion he hath of Chriſt. And as the Difficulty lies in this, in the firſt Awakening of the Conſcience from Sin, ſo, in After-times of Temptation, and Apprehenſion of Wrath, when upon ſome new added Guiltineſs, or a new Sight of the old, in a frightful Manner, *Sin revives, and the Soul dies*, 'tis ſtruck dead with the Terrors of the Law: Then to keep thy Hold, and find another Life in Chriſt, the Law and Juſtice ſatisfied, and ſo the Conſcience quieted in him, this is indeed to believe.

'Tis a Thing of huge Difficulty to bring Men to a Senſe of their natural Miſery, to ſee that they have Need of a Saviour, and to look out for one; but then being brought to that, 'tis no leſs, if not more difficult, to perſuade them that Chriſt is he; that as they have Need of him, ſo they need no more, he being able and ſufficient for them. All the Waverings and Fears of misbelieving Minds do ſpring from dark and narrow Apprehenſions of Jeſus Chriſt. All the Doubt is not of their Intereſt, as they imagine; they who ſay ſo, and think it is ſo, do not perceive the Bottom and Root of their own Malady: They ſay, they do no whit doubt but that he is able enough, and his Righteouſneſs large enough; but all the Doubt is, *if he belong to me.* Now, I ſay, this Doubt ariſes from a Defect and Doubt of the former, wherein you ſuſpect it not. Why doubts thou that he belongs to thee? Doſt thou fly to him, as loſt and undone in thyſelf? Doſt thou renounce all that can be called thine, and ſeek thy Life in him? Then he is *thine. He came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt.* Oh! But I find ſo much, not only former, but ſtill daily renewed and increaſing Guiltineſs.

Why? Is he a ſufficient Saviour? Or, Is he not? If thou doſt ſay, he is not, then it is manifeſt, that here lies the Defect and Miſtake: If thou ſay'ſt, he is, then haſt thou anſwered all thy Objections of that Kind; much Guiltineſs, much or little, old or new, neither helps nor hinders, as to thy Intereſt in him, and Salvation by him. And for diſpelling of theſe Miſts, nothing can be more effectual than the letting in of theſe Goſpel Beams, the clear Expreſſions of his Riches and Fulneſs in the Scriptures, and eminently this, *made of God, Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs.*

Wiſdom.] Both *objectively* and *effectively*. *Objectively*, I mean, all *our* Wiſdom, to be in the right Knowledge and Apprehenſion of him; and this ſuits to the Apoſtle's preſent Diſcourſe. The *Jews* would have *a Sign*, and the *Gentiles*, *Wiſdom*; but *we preach Chriſt:* So *Chap.* ii. *I determined to know nothing, ſave Chriſt crucified.* He was learnedly bred, and knew many Things beſide; much of Nature, and much of the Law: But all this was to him overdated, uſeleſs Stuff; it was as if he never had heard of, nor known any thing elſe but Jeſus Chriſt. We may know other Things; but this, and this alone, is our Wiſdom, *to know him, and him crucified:* Particularly, we may have Knowledge of the Law, and by it the Knowledge of Sin; but in relation to our ſtanding before God, and ſo our Happineſs, which is the greateſt Point of Wiſdom, Jeſus Chriſt is alone, and is all. And the more firmly a Soul eyes Chriſt, and loſes all other Knowledge, and itſelf in contemplating him, the more truly wiſe and heavenly it is.

And *effectively* he is our Wiſdom. All our right Knowledge of him, and Belief in him, flows from himſelf, is derived from him, and ſent into our Souls. His Spirit is conveyed into ours; a Beam of himſelf, as of the Sun: This Sun of Righteouſneſs

is not ſeen but by his own Light; ſo that every Soul that is made wiſe unto Salvation, that is brought to apprehend Chriſt, to cleave to him, and repoſe on him, it is by an Immiſſion of Divine Light from himſelf, that ſhews him, and leads unto him. And ſo we know God in him. There is no right Knowledge of the Father but in the Son; God dwelling in the *Man Chriſt*, will be found or known no where elſe; and they that conſider, and worſhip God out of Chriſt, do not know or worſhip the true God, but a falſe Notion and Fancy of their own.

The *Shechina*, the *Habitation of the Majeſty*, is Jeſus Chriſt; there he dwells as between the Cherubims over the Mercy-Seat. To apprehend God ſo, is to love him, and truſt in him all our Life, to hope to find Favour and Bliſs with him; this is the only wiſe Knowledge of him: Now, this alone is in Chriſt, and from him. He contains this Repreſentation of God, and gives his own Light to ſee it; ſo that a Chriſtian's Deſire would be, in relation to Jeſus Chriſt, that of *David* to the Temple, as a Figure of him, *One Thing have I deſired of him, and that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the Houſe of the Lord*; that I may get in to Chriſt, to know God there, *to behold the Beauty of the Lord.* There we ſee Beauty indeed, the Father's Glory, and ſo as *our Father*, reconciled to us, we ſee him *merciful and gracious.* And as *to behold*, ſo ſtill *to enquire* in his Temple, to advance in the Knowledge of God, ſtudying him in Chriſt; to admire what we ſee, and ſeek ſtill to ſee more. And to know that this Knowledge of God, as we have it *in Chriſt*, ſo *from him.* He reveals the Father; he came from his Boſom for that Purpoſe. We cannot believe on him, cannot come near God through him, but as he lets forth of his Light, to conduct and lead us in, yea, powerfully to draw in, for his Light does ſo. Now, knowing and appre-

hending him by his own Light, his Spirit, the Apoſtle clears it, that this is our *Wiſdom*, by thoſe rich Titles added: According to which we find him to us, when we receive from him that Wiſdom, by which we apprehend him aright, and lay hold on him; then *made unto us Righteouſneſs, Sanctification and Redemption.*

Righteouſneſs.] This doubtleſs is meant of the Righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified before God; and he is *made this to us*, applied by Faith: *His Righteouſneſs becomes ours.* That Exchange made, our Sins are laid over upon him, and his Obedience put upon us. This, the great glad Tidings, that we are made righteous by Chriſt: 'Tis not a Righteouſneſs wrought by us, but given to us, and put upon us. This carnal Reaſon cannot apprehend, and being proud, therefore rejects and argues againſt it; ſays, *How can this Thing be?* But Faith cloſes with it, and rejoices in it; without either Doing or Suffering, the Sinner is acquitted and juſtified, and ſtands as guiltleſs of Breach, yea, as having fulfilled the whole Law. And happy they that thus faſten upon this Righteouſneſs; they may lift up their Faces with Gladneſs and Boldneſs before God: Whereas the moſt induſtrious ſelf-ſaving Juſticiary, though in other Mens Eyes and his own, poſſibly for the preſent, he makes a gliſtering Shew, yet when he ſhall come to be examined of God, and tried according to the Law, he ſhall be covered with Shame, and confounded in his Folly and Guiltineſs. But Faith triumphs over Self-unworthineſs, and Sin, and Death, and the Law, ſhrowding the Soul under the Mantle of Jeſus Chriſt; and there it is ſafe: All Accuſations fall off, having no where to faſten, unleſs ſome Blemiſh could be found in that Righteouſneſs in which Faith hath wrapt itſelf. This is the very Spring of ſolid Peace, and fills the Soul with Peace and Joy.

But

But ſtill Men would have ſomething within themſelves to make out the Matter, as if this Robe needed any ſuch piecing; and not finding what they deſire, thence Diſquiet and Unſettlement of Mind ariſes.

True it is, that this Faith purifies the Heart, and works Holineſs, and all Graces flow from it: But in this Work of juſtifying the Sinner, it is alone, and cannot admit of any Mixture, as *Luther*'s Reſemblance is, "Faith is as the Bride with Chriſt in the "Bed-chamber alone; but when ſhe cometh forth, "hath the Attendance and Train of other Graces "with her." This well underſtood, the Soul that believes on Jeſus Chriſt, will not let go, for all Deficiency in itſelf; and yet ſo reſting on him, will not be ſlothful nor regardleſs of any Duty of Holineſs: Yea, this is the Way to abound in all the Fruits of the Spirit, firſt, to have that Wiſdom from him, rightly to apprehend and apply him as our *Righteouſneſs*, and then ſhall we find all Furniture of Grace in him; he will likewiſe be *Sanctification*. Say not, "Unleſs I find ſome Meaſure of *Sanctifi*-"*cation*, what Right have I to apply him as "my *Righteouſneſs?*" This inverts the Order, and prejudges thee of both. Thou muſt firſt, without finding, yea, or ſeeking any thing in thyſelf but Miſery and Guiltineſs, lay hold on him as thy *Righteouſneſs*; or elſe thou ſhalt never find *Sanctification* by any other Endeavour or Purſuit.

He it is that is *made Sanctification to us*, and out of him we ſeek it in vain. Now, firſt, He muſt be *thy Righteouſneſs*, before thou find him *thy Sanctification:* Simply, as a guilty Sinner, thou muſt fly to him for Shelter; and then, being come in, thou ſhalt be furniſh'd out of his Fulneſs, with *Grace for Grace*. As a poor Man purſued by the Juſticiary, flying to a ſtrong Caſtle for Safety, and being in it, finds

finds it a rich Palace, and all his Wants ſupplied there.

This miſunderſtanding of that Method is the Cauſe of much of that Darkneſs and Diſcomfort, and withal of that Deadneſs and Defect of Graces, that many Perſons go drooping under, who will not take this Way, the only ſtreight and ſure Way of Life and Comfort. Now,

Sanctification.] He is to us not only as a perfect Pattern, but as a powerful Principle. 'Tis really the Spirit of Chriſt in a Believer, that crucifies the World, and purges out Sin, and forms the Soul to his Likeneſs. It is impoſſible to be holy, not being in him; and being truly in him, it is as impoſſible not to be holy: Our pothering and turmoiling without him, makes us loſe our Labour; and in this Point indeed, *Little Wit makes much Labour.*

Redemption.] Sin is often prevailing, even in Believers; and therewithal Diſcomforts and Doubts ariſing, as it cannot otherwiſe chuſe: Oh! how do they groan and ſigh as Captives ſtill to the Law of Sin and Death. Well, there is in our Lord Jeſus Help for that too, He is *Redemption*, that is, the Compliment and Fulneſs of Deliverance, the Price he paid once for all. Now he goes on to work that Deliverance by Conqueſt, that he bought by Ranſom: It is going on, even when we feel it not; and within a little while it ſhall be perfected, and we ſhall ſee all the Hoſt of our Enemies that purſued us, as *Iſrael* ſaw the *Ægyptians*, ly dead upon the Shore. Courage! that Day is coming; and all this, that *he that glories, may glory in the Lord:* Is it not reaſonable? No Self-glorying; the more Faith, the leſs ſtill of that. A Believer is nothing in himſelf: All is Chriſt's: Chriſt is his All; (that Treaſurer, that being called to an Account, becauſe that out of nothing he had enrich'd himſelf ſuddenly, many thought

thought he would have been puzzled with it; but he, without being much moved, next Morning came before the King in an old Suit that he wore before he got that Office, and ſaid, "Sir, this Suit on my "Back is mine, but all the reſt is thine:" So our old Suit is ours, all the reſt Chriſt's, and he allows it well) and in the full and pure Glory that aſcends to God in this Work, are we to rejoice more than in the Work itſelf, as our Salvation. There is an humble kind of boaſting that becomes a Chriſtian, *My Soul ſhall glory*, or *make her Boaſt in God*, ſays *David*, *all the Day long*. What was I before I met with Chriſt? thinks a Believer: And now what am I? And, upon that Thought, wonders and loves. But moſt of the Wonder is yet to come; for he conceives but little what we ſhall be.

SERMON VI.

JEREMIAH X. 23, 24.

O Lord, I know that the Way of Man is not in himſelf; it is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps.
O Lord, correct me, but with Judgment; not in thine Anger, leſt thou bring me to nothing.

IT cannot be expreſſed what an Advantage a Heart acquaint with God hath, in all the Revolutions and Changes of the World, when it turns in to him, and gives Vent to its Griefs and Deſires into his Boſom, and ſo finds Eaſe. This the Prophet does here, after the denouncing of a heavy Judgment, he turns to-

towards him from whom he brought that Meſſage, to entreat for them to whom he brought it. After a very ſad Cloſe of his Sermon, he adds this ſhort but very ſweet Prayer; preſents himſelf, and ſpeaks in that Stile, as repreſenting the whole People, *Correct me, O Lord*; makes their Calamity, as it were, all his own; bears their Perſon, and preſents his Petition for them in his own Name. The Prophets, though they could not but applaud and approve the Juſtice of God that ſent them in the harſheſt News they brought; yet withal could not be inſenſible of the Miſeries of his People: And ſo we find them mixing pathetical Complaints and Prayers for them, with the Predictions of Judgments againſt them.

Obſer. And thus are all his faithful Miniſters affected towards his Church. The Lord himſelf is pleaſed to expreſs a kind of Regret, ſometimes in the puniſhing of them. As the tender-hearted Father feels the Laſhes he lays on, though highly deſerved by the Stubbornneſs of his Children, *Hoſ.* xi. 8. *How ſhall I give thee up, Ephraim? how ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? how ſhall I make thee as Admah? how ſhall I make thee as Zeboim? Mine Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together.* So it well becomes his Servants to be thus affected, when they deliver ſad News to his People, to return Praying for them: Thus going, as Angels betwixt Heaven and Earth, beſeeching the People to return unto God, and beſeeching God to return to his People, and ſpare them.

The Prophet, in this Prayer, firſt premiſes a *Poſition* ſuiting his Purpoſe; and then, upon that, preſents his *Supplication*. The *Poſition* he lays, to make a double Benefit of it in order to his *Petition*. 'Tis both a ſure Ground for himſelf to ſtand on, and a fit Argument to move God by. Thus it is, and thus he intends and uſes it, at once to ſupport his own Faith,

Faith, and work on the Goodneſs of God by it. Beſide the Fitneſs of the Truth itſelf for both theſe Ends, we find ſome Print of both, in the very Way of expreſſing it, *O Lord, I know that the Way of Man is not in himſelf*, &c. ſo expreſſing both his own Perſuaſion of the Truth of it, *I know*, and repreſenting it to God, as a fit Truth to urge his Suit by, *O Lord, I know.*

Obſer. A great Part of the Strength and Art of Prayer lies in this, firſt, to have the Mind furniſh'd with fit Conceptions of God, and eſtabliſh'd in the firm Perſuaſions of them; in that is much of the Strength of Prayer: Then fitly to call up, and uſe theſe Conceptions and Perſuaſions, for our own ſupporting and prevailing with God; in that lies the Art of it.

We poſſibly do think that we do ſufficiently believe both the Goodneſs and Power of God, eſpecially his Power, none ſuſpecting himſelf of the leaſt Doubt of it; yet our perplexing Doubts and Fears, our feeble Staggerings in Faith and Prayer, upon particular preſſing Difficulties, diſcover evidently a Defect here, though ſtill we will not own it. And alas! how little Faculty have we in the moſt needful Times, to reſt on his Strength, and to ſtir up ourſelves, to ſtir him up by Prayer, to do for us, holding firm to that great Point of his abſolute Sovereignty and Power over all Things, and holding it up to him, entreating him by it to appear and work for us: "Lord, it is in thy Hand; that I know, "and that is enough to me: Thy Good-will I dare "truſt," (for there is implied a ſecret Confidence of "that) "this contents me, that thou haſt full Power "of the Buſineſs." That is the Thing here the Prophet fixes on, *O Lord, I know that the Way of Man is not in himſelf.*

" As there is in us no Power to turn off the Judg-
" ment determined, all our Wit and Strength can do
" nothing to that; ſo we are ſure there is no Power in
" our Enemies to do any thing, either beyond or be-
" ſide thy Appointment, in the Execution of it: And
" upon this, Lord, we come to ſupplicate thee for
" Mitigation. With Men it often falls out, either in
" juſt Puniſhments, or unjuſt Oppreſſions, that the
" Miniſters and Under-Officers do exceed their Com-
" miſſion, and overdo their Buſineſs; yea, ſometimes
" add little leſs of their own, than all that comes to,
" that is appointed to them: But with thee, O
" Lord, it is not ſo. As our Enemies cannot ſtir of
" themſelves without Order from thee; and as thy
" Commiſſions are always all juſt, ſo thou ſeeſt to
" the Performance, art preſent at it, which often
" Men cannot be: And ſo nothing is or can be done
" beſide thy Notice and Allowance."

His Poſition is this, *The Way of Man is not in himſelf*; and repeated more plainly, *it is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps*. Thus, by a double Negation, putting it altogether out of his Power; and under this the poſitive Truth is couched, that the abſolute Diſpoſal of all the Ways of Men is wholly in the ſupreme Hand of God; according to that, *Prov.* xx. 24. *Man's Goings are of the Lord.* How can a Man then underſtand his Way? He doth not certainly know any thing of his own Doings; even he that ſeems to know moſt, to adviſe and deliberate upon all he does, yet hath no Power of his Contrivements, knows not which Way they will turn, till the Event doth clear it; and even then, looking back, is often amazed at the ſtrange Courſe of Things, ſo far different from, and poſſibly contrary to all his witty Projections and Models, often does not attain *his own*, but never fails to accompliſh God's Purpoſe, even when his Intentions are leaſt

for

for it, yea, when they are moſt againſt it: *Let us build a Tower*, ſaid they, *Gen.* xi. *leſt we be ſcattered abroad*; and that was the very Thing cauſed their Scattering. *Joſeph* was *ſold by his Brethren*, that they might not *bow before him*, as he had dreamed; and this brought it to paſs. *Pharaoh* ſays, *Let us deal wiſely.* And that Way of oppreſſing them, leſt they ſhould go away, both ſtir'd up God to deliver them, and diſpoſed them to depart. And not to multiply Inſtances, generally in all the Ways of Men, they have their Deſigns moſt times excentrick to God's; but his holds always, and theirs no further, than they are his. Have we not ourſelves ſeen Inſtances of this?

Man conſults and determines freely; yet even theſe inward Actings of the Mind and Will, are ordered and framed by the Hand of God, and it cannot otherwiſe be. It is a moſt vain Fancy, to imagine that any thing in this is inconſiſtent with the natural Liberty of his Will, or that any ſuch Liberty can be in any Creature, as conſiſts not with his; but becauſe in theſe inward Actings, Man finds himſelf more at his Choice, though all is ſecretly overruled, and in the Event of Things, God's ſovereign Diſpoſe is more legible; therefore theſe two are expreſt with ſome kind of Difference, *Prov.* xvi. 9. *A Man's Heart deviſeth his Way, but the Lord directs his Steps*: That is, when he hath deviſed, that does not carry it; (he may deviſe and fancy Things twenty Ways, and think he is taking freely his own Courſe, but he ſhall find in the Iſſue another Hand than his own, *It is not in Man that walks*, as the Word is here, *he walketh*, and yet the Direction of his Steps is in another Hand.) But in the Deviſings too, the Lord ſo acts Man, that he is turned which Way it pleaſeth him; even the Heart, and that of the moſt uncontrouled, the moſt impetuous Torrent, *the King's Heart is in his Hand, as the Ri-*

vers of Waters, &c. When Men either determine themſelves, or follow unallowed Ways for Determination, as thoſe, *Ezek.* xxi. 21. yet are they ordered of God. This he does infallibly and uncontroulably, yet in ſuch a Way as there is nothing diſtorted or violented *. All is ſo done; Things are in their own Courſe, and Men are in their voluntary Choices, yet all ſubſerving the great Lord, and his Ends, and his Glory, that made them all for himſelf; (as the lower Orbs have each their Motion, but are all wheeled about with the firſt: Men know not what he is doing by them, and what in the End he will do with them, *Iſa.* x. *With the Rod of Aſſyria* he ſcourges his Children, and then throws the Rod in the Fire, *Ver.* 15, 16. The Horſe-leech draws the Blood to fill itſelf, but the Phyſician intends the Patient's Health.) Men are drawn on by temporal Proſperings and Succeſſes to drive proudly and furiouſly, till they drive themſelves over the Edge of the Precipice appointed for their Ruin; and all his exalting them for a Seaſon, is, in End, to exalt himſelf in their greater and more remarkable Deſtruction. *I will get me a Name upon Pharaoh, and all his Hoſt.* Men are buſy, conſulting or acting with or againſt one another, and he ſits and laughs at their wiſeſt Plots; he alone is in all Affairs, doing all his own Will in Heaven and in Earth.

Oh! the Folly and Blindneſs of Men, that think to carry all to their Minds, and walk as Maſters of their own Deſigns, and never have any ſerious Thought of him, in whoſe Hands both they, and all their Buſineſs, and all the Affairs of States and Kingdoms of this World, are as a Piece of Wax, to frame them to what he pleaſes. He that *deſtroys the Counſels of the Wiſe*, and *makes the Diviners mad*, that *pours Contempt upon Princes, leads Counſellors away ſpoiled, and maketh the Judges Fools*: He that hath

* *Fortiter & ſuaviter.* ſet

ſet Limits to all Things, to the *raging of the Sea*, makes the ſmall Sand give Check to the great Ocean, when it *brake out of the Womb*, he had a Cradle provided for it, and ſwadling Bands, *Job* xxxviii. and there, though it rolls to and fro, yet cannot get out. Oh! it is Ignorance of God makes Men ruſh on, and not enquire whether he be with them or no. *Moſes* was wiſe and ſtout, and Leader of a numerous People, yet he would not ſtir on other Terms; *If thou go not with us, let us not go up hence:* Well, if Men will on their Peril, be it; let us reverence God; for even this is from him, and he will gain his Glory out of it. *The Way of Man is not in himſelf.* If we ſee their Folly, let us learn to be wiſer, to keep cloſe to him, and deſire his gracious Direction of our Ways; for it is not in our Hands, even when we intend beſt. And for publick Affairs, let us reſt ſatisfied in his Part. Amidſt all Diſorders, he is ordering all wiſely and juſtly, and to them that love him, graciouſly; therefore we ought not to be diſmayed. Let us calm our Thoughts with this, Remember who it is that rules all, and diſpoſes of Peace and War, and all Affairs, and we cannot wiſh them in a better Hand. I am perſuaded, that in all the Commotions of the World, when a Believer thinks on this, it cannot but calm and compoſe his Spirit exceedingly, *My Father rules all.* Let this ſo quiet our Fears, as that withal it quicken our Prayers, and ſtir us up to the Work of this Day, repentant humble ſeeking unto God; ſeeing all is in his Hands, our Peace, our Liberties, and our Enemies that threaten to bereave us of both. Oh! that the Effect of all our Troubles and Dangers were to drive us more to God, to make us throng more about the Throne of Grace, to draw forth our King for our Help. Oh! our Impenitence and Unreformedneſs, that turns him to be our Enemy, and that only, Men are nothing; and now in ſo great

Straits,

Straits, yet ſo little calling on him! Oh! my Brethren, what are we doing? O! Pray, pray; it is our God that commands all; and we may ſay it, upon his own Warrant, *It is Prayer that commands him.*

Correct me, &c.] When the Hand of God is ſtretched out againſt a People or a Perſon, certainly there is no running from him: The only wiſe and ſafe Courſe is, to run in to him; this the Prophet does in Behalf of his People, and by his Example teaches them ſo to do. As the Prophet utters his own Senſe and Deſires in this Prayer, ſo he ſets it as a Copy to the People of God, in time of Judgment, to pray by, ſhews them the Way, which is not vainly to offer to fly from him, or proudly to ſtand out againſt him, to their Undoing, but to humble themſelves under his mighty Hand, ſupplicating him, yielding themſelves, and begging Quarter, *Correct me, O Lord, with Judgment, not in Anger, leſt thou bring me to nothing.* That I ſuffer for my Rebellion, good Reaſon; yet, Lord, do not utterly deſtroy me; which will be, if the Weight of thine Anger fall upon me: And for that, tho' indeed we have deſerved it, yet there is *another Vent for it*, and pardon us to ſay ſo, *fitter Matter for it. Pour out thy Wrath upon the Heathen*; let it go out that Way. So we ſee the Supplication hath theſe two Particulars in it, an *Averſion*, and a *Diverſion*: An *Averſion* of the Anger of God from his own People under Correction; and a *Diverſion* of it upon his and their Enemies: *Lord, turn from us, and pour it out there.* The *Averſion* is preſented, qualified with a humble Submiſſion, declaring expreſly they decline not that Correction of God, but only deprecate his conſuming Anger.

Correct me, O Lord, but with Judgment, that is, with Meaſure; ſuch as the Diſcretion and Love of

a Father reſolves on towards his Child: Thus much will I correct him for his Good, and no further,

Not in thine Anger. God is pleaſed to expreſs his Diſpleaſure againſt Sin, by Wrath and Anger, even towards his own Children: But the Anger here the Prophet entreats Exception from for the Church, is Anger oppoſed to Judgment, unbounded deſtroying Anger, that knows no Limits nor Stop, but the devouring of theſe againſt whom it is kindled. This is ſpoken in our Language, but is to be underſtood in a Way ſuiting the Purity of God. In him truly is no Paſſion at all, much leſs any that is not ordered by Wiſdom and Judgment. He is not carried in Heat beyond his purpoſed Meaſure, but knows well how far he intends to go with any, and goes no further. But as his Anger means his juſt puniſhing of Sin, ſo his unlimited Anger ſignifies no other but his juſt proceeding in Puniſhment, to the utter Deſtruction of inflexible Sinners; and to this is oppoſed here his *correcting with Judgment*, that is, in a fatherly gracious Moderation, ſuch as does not utterly ruin and cut off, but indeed reclaims and converts Sinners unto him.

This Submiſſion and Yieldance to a meaſured Correction, is a thing moſt reaſonable; they that know any thing aright of themſelves and God, will not refuſe it,

Firſt, Reflecting on their own Sinfulneſs, which when truly diſcovered, even where there is leaſt, yet is there enough of it to juſtify even utter Deſtruction: Therefore have we good Reaſon, unrepiningly to receive ſuch moderate Correction from the Hand of God, as he thinks fit, and to wonder that it is no more. 'Tis one true Character of Repentance under the Rod, to *accept the Puniſhment of our Iniquity*, to have our untamed Spirits brought low, to ſtoop to God, to acknowledge our Puniſhment to be far

leſs

leſs than our Iniquity; and that it is of his Goodneſs that we are not conſumed, as the Church confeſſes. Though we feel it heavy, and the Meaſure hard, yet Self-knowledge and Conſcience of Sin will lay the Soul low, and make it quiet, will ſay nothing, or if any thing, it will be Confeſſion of its own Guiltineſs, and the Righteouſneſs of God; ſtill clearing him in all, as it is *Pſal.* li. 4. and uſing that other, *Pſal.* cxix. whatſoever is ſo inflicted, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, juſt are thy Judgments:* Which Words a good King uſed, being put in Priſon, and hardly dealt with; ſo the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* xxxviii. 3. (There is *no Soundneſs in my Fleſh becauſe of thine Anger, neither is there any Reſt in my Bones becauſe of my Sin*) juſtifies God's Anger by his own Sin. Thus *Daniel* makes Confeſſion for this People, under the very Captivity here threatned, when it had laſted out the full Term, *Dan.* ix.

And knowing our Sin, ought we not to allow God the clearing of his own Juſtice, his Purity and Hatred of Sin, in puniſhing it, and poſſibly moſt exemplarily here, in thoſe that are neareſt him, his own People and Children, can leaſt endure it there. This, eſpecially, when we conſider his Sovereignty and Greatneſs, that he is tied to no Account of his Actings; and though we did not ſee ſo clear Reaſon for our Sufferings in our Deſervings, there is Reaſon enough in his Will. And this, well conſidered, would bring us to much humble Submiſſion in all, *I was dumb*, ſays *David*, *I opened not my Mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.* The Biſhop of *Troyes* meeting *Attila* marching towards the City, asked who he was? *I am*, ſaid he, *the Scourge of God*, and cauſed ſet open the Gates to him; but God marvellouſly reſtrained the Soldiers in that City.

But yet further, as our own Guiltineſs, and God's Righteouſneſs and Greatneſs, plead for this Compliance

pliance with his Chaſtiſements; ſo even his Goodneſs, and our own Profit, in them. There is in his chaſtiſing of his own People very much Mercy, that they may not be condemned with the World. Their Afflictions have a ſecret Stamp of Love on them; *By this is the Iniquity of Jacob purged*, &c. He purifies a People in his Furnace, that they may be holy unto him, gives his own many ſweet Experiences of ſecret Support and Comfort in Affliction, and ſeaſonable Delivery out of it, and brings them forth with Advantage, *The peaceable Fruits of Righteouſneſs*, Heb .xii. He humbles and purges a People or Perſon, by his Rods, and prepares them for greater Mercies to enjoy them, both more ſweetly and uſefully; renews his Covenant, and the mutual Endearments of Love betwixt himſelf and his People; according to the gracious Promiſes made to his People, in relation to this very Judgment here threatned, and after inflicted on them, *Iſa.* liv. *Ezek.* xxxvi.

We, poſſibly, think it ſtrange that our Preſſures and Troubles ſtill continue, and rather grow upon us than abate: But we *judge not wiſely concerning this*; the moſt part curſing and repining, others falling into a dead hopeleſs Stupidneſs, not caring what become of Things: But our beſt Courſe were, to turn to him that ſmites us, to acknowledge our Rebellions and his Juſtice, to eye Men leſs and God more, in our Sufferings, and confeſs that our Provocations exceed all that is come upon us, to fall down humbly before God, and take ſubmiſſively with his Chaſtiſements, *Correct me, O Lord, but with Judgment*, &c. and with the Church, *I will bear the Indignation of the Lord, becauſe I have ſinned againſt him*, Mic. vii. Thus likewiſe, in private perſonal Correctings, let us learn to behave ourſelves meekly and humbly, as the Children of ſo great and good a Father; what-

ſoever he inflicts, not to murmur, nor entertain a fretful Thought of it. Beſides the Undutifulneſs and Unſeemlineſs of it, how vain is it? What gain we by ſtruggling, and caſting up our Hand, to caſt off the Rod, but the more Laſhes? Our only Way is to kneel, and fold under his Hands, and kiſs his Rods, and, even while he is ſmiting us, to be bleſſing him, ſending up Confeſſions of his Righteouſneſs, and Goodneſs, and Faithfulneſs, only entreating for the turning away of his Wrath, though it ſhould be with the continuing our Affliction; that is here the Stile of the Prophet's Prayer, *Correct me, O Lord, but not in Anger:* And, according to this Suit, even where Troubles are Chaſtiſements for Sin, yet a Child of God may find much Sweetneſs; reading much of God's Love in ſo dealing with them; not ſuffering them to grow wanton, and forget him; as in much Eaſe, even his own Children ſometimes do: And as they may find much of God's Love to them in ſharp Corrections, they may raiſe and act much of their Love to him in often-repeated Reſignments and Submiſſions of themſelves, and ready conſenting to, yea, rejoicing in his good Pleaſure, even in theſe Things that to their Fleſh and Senſe are moſt unpleaſant.

Now, to the *Petition*, the averting of his Anger: That is the great Requeſt of them that know and fear him; and there is high Reaſon for it, the heavieſt Sufferings are light without it: But the leaſt Ingredient of that adds inexpreſſible Weight to the ſmalleſt Affliction. This was the Thing, likely, made the Viſage of Death ſo ſad to holy Men in Scripture, *David*, *Hezekiah*, &c. that at theſe Times it had ſome Character of God's Anger againſt them upon it, came to them as a Meſſenger of Diſpleaſure: So a Thing ſmall in itſelf may be a great Curſe. To be caſt out unburied is no great Matter, natural

Men

Men ſlight it *; there is little Difference, to ly eaten of Beaſts above Ground, or of Worms beneath: Yet when foretold to a Man as a Judgment denounced from God, as againſt that King, *Jer.* xxii. 19. it hath its own Weight, carrying ſome Stamp of God's deſpiſing him; and though a Man feels it not when it is done, yet he feels it, looking on it before-hand, eſpecially as threatned of God, ſees himſelf, as it were, dragged about and torn.

Now if any little particular Croſs mark'd with God's preſent Anger become ſo heavy, how much more is his abiding prolonged Wrath? The Thing here ſpoke of, *Anger*, to which no Bounds is ſet, that (ſays he, in Name of his People) *would bring me to nought*; there is no ſtanding before it, it will make the ſtouteſt and proudeſt to ſhake, yea, ſhakes them to pieces. If the *Wrath of a King* be to meaner Men *as the roaring of a Lion*, how much more terrible, even to Kings themſelves, is the Wrath of God? This great King, whoſe *Voice ſhakes the Mountains*, and makes the Earth *to tremble*, Armies of Terrors and Deaths are nothing to a Look of his angry Countenance. *If he withdraws his Anger*, Job ix. *the proud Helpers ſtoop under him*; the Helpers of Pride, the great *Atlaſſ*'s of the World, that are thought to bear up all thoſe, that for their Wit and Power are thought the Supporters of the Kingdoms, how ſoon are they cruſh'd to pieces by a Touch of this Anger of God, and *periſh at the Rebuke of his Countenance? O Lord*, ſays that holy Man, (conſidering the Frailty of poor Man, and the Power of God) *who knows the Power of thine Anger*, Pſal. xc. *even according to thy Fear ſo is thy Wrath*; full as much, yea far more terrible than any can apprehend it.

* *Cœlo tegitur, qui non habet urnam.*

They that dare go on in Ways, wherein it may be but ſuſpected that he is againſt them, Oh! they know him not. Let us conſider, and fear before him; and, for the Land, ſtill entreat the turning away of his Wrath, rather than Deliverances from any Preſſures. " Lord, while thou thinkeſt good fur-
" ther to afflict us, ſo as to draw us nearer to thee,
" we are content; yea, we ſhall bleſs thee: But
" whatſoever thou do with us, ſuffer not thy hot
" Diſpleaſure to ariſe againſt us, for then we are un-
" done." So this is all a Soul under his Hand, in Affliction, ought to ſay, *Correct me, but not in Wrath, leſt thou bring me to nothing:* " Thou knoweſt I can-
" not ſtand before that." He is pleaſed to look to this, and to expreſs it, as that which moderates his Anger, even when juſtly incenſed, *Iſa.* lvii. 16. *I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth; for the Spirit ſhould fail before me, and the Souls which I have made,* to lay this before him, " Lord, if thou will,
" how quickly and how eaſily couldſt thou break
" into Pieces, or ſink into nothing, not only me, a
" little Atom of it, but the entire Frame of this
" whole World, and therefore ſtrive not with me." This often *Job* repreſents, and God is pleaſed to move himſelf, to reſtrain his Wrath, and draw forth his Mercy by it, *Pſal.* lxxv. 38, 39. and *Pſal.* ciii. 14. his great Compaſſion lays hold on ſuch Conſiderations; and this may furniſh great Confidence to Souls under a Senſe of Wrath, that do but fall down and entreat for Mercy. He that ſo often prevents us, when we ſeek it not, will he caſt any away that ſeeks and ſuits for it?

The *Diverſion*, briefly, is to the Heathen, the profeſſed and obdured Enemies of God and his Church:
" Thy Wrath, O Lord, may have its Courſe, and
" yet ſpare thy People: There is Matter enough
" for it round about, good for nothing elſe, and
" good

" good Reaſon for it, beſides all other Wickedneſs, " their Spite and Cruelty againſt thy People, *for they* " *have eaten up Jacob.*"

Next, the Character of the Ungodly, that are fit Fewel for this Fire, *that know not, and call not on thy Name*, that profeſs not, pretend not to be thine. Tremble you that are too like theſe, though reputed amongſt the People of God. Seek the Knowledge of God, and worſhip him, Families and Perſons, leſt this Curſe come upon you.

Now, this prophetical foretelling the utter Deſtruction of the Church's Enemies, whereas the Church is *corrected in meaſure*, and not deſtroyed: She is firſt puniſhed; but they that come laſt, the Enemies, the heavieſt Wrath falls down there and ſmothers them, ends on them, and makes an End of them, *Jer.* xxx. 11. The Belief of this may uphold the Faithful in the Church's greateſt Diſtreſſes. When at the loweſt, then the Wrath is neareſt changing Place, and removing to her Enemies.

And this is to be ſo deſired and prayed for, in Reference to the implacable Enemies of God, that we beware we mix nothing of our own Intereſt or Paſſion with it; as Wrath in God is without any Diſturbance †; ſo ſomewhat like is the Deſire of it in the Godly, calm undiſtempered Love of the Name of God. And ſo ſhall the Saints rejoice in the final Victory and Triumph of Chriſt over all his Enemies, and their final Ruin in that Day, when they ſhall be made his Footſtool: Then they ſhall have a pure Complacency and Delight in his Juſtice, (that ſhall make all even;) and why are we diſquieted, if we hope for that Day?

SER-

† *Æſtuat & tranquillus eſt.*

SERMON VII.

Isaiah XXX. 15—19.

For thus ſaith the Lord God, the holy One of Iſrael, in Returning and Reſt ſhall ye be ſaved, in Quietneſs and in Confidence ſhall be your Strength; and ye would not.

But ye ſaid, No, for we will flee upon Horſes, therefore ſhall ye flee: And we will ride upon the ſwift, therefore ſhall they that purſue you, be ſwift.

One thouſand ſhall flee at the Rebuke of one: At the Rebuke of five ſhall ye flee, till ye be left as a Beacon upon the Top of a Mountain, and as an Enſign on an Hill.

And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have Mercy upon you: For the Lord is a God of Judgment; bleſſed are all they that wait for him.

IN the Sentence of that greateſt and biggeſt Judgment that ever yet came on the World, the univerſal Deluge, as we have it, *Gen.* vi. that Word doth moſt lively expreſs the Reaſon of it, *My Spirit ſhall not alway ſtrive with Man:* For thus it is, while he ſpares even his own People, he is at a continual Strife with them, by gracious Entreaties and Mercies, by Advices and Warnings and Threatnings, ſtill conteſting; that is the Way he uſes in the Conteſt, on his Part, againſt Refuſes and Revolts and Rebellions on their Part. Thus here.

The Queſtion betwixt him and his People here, is about the Help of *Egypt*: This God often declares to be wholly againſt his Mind, and their own Good; yet

yet they on all Occaſions had ſo ſtrong a Mind to it, that they could not be diverted. The Prophet here hath his Meſſage concerning this Point, to preach it, and to write it, to remain *ad perpetuam rei memoriam*, as they ſpeak, *Ver.* 7, 8. ſhews them plainly, that this Courſe was wholly without the Counſel and Conſent of God, yea, directly againſt it, and that it ſhould ſucceed accordingly: *The Strength of Pharaoh ſhall be their Shame, and their Truſt in the Shadow of Egypt their Confuſion*; it ſhall prove to you according to its Name, *a Land of Diſtreſs*, Ver. 6. *and Trouble*, inſtead of Help. And if you'd know what would ſuit that other Name of *Egypt* better, that were humble Yieldance to God, and Confidence in him, *Ver.* 7. your *Rahab*, your beſt *Egypt*, your trueſt Strength were, to ſit ſtill: This is here again repreſented to them, ſo gladly would he reclaim them.

For thus ſaith the Lord.] The Words have, 1*ſt*, God's expreſs *Advice* to his People. 2*dly*, Their peremptory *Refuſe* of it. 3*dly*, His juſt *Sentence* paſt upon their Obſtinacy. The *Advice* prefaced with the uſual Words of the Prophets, *Thus ſaith the Lord*; for in that lies the Dignity and Authority of the Meſſage. His Advices, doubtleſs, are the choiceſt and the ſafeſt; yea, his Counſels are all Commands, requiring duly the moſt abſolute Obedience.

The Lord Jehovah. Were but his Word known to be his, and taken ſo, how would our Souls melt, and yield to the Impreſſions of it, when we read or hear? Oh! learn to hear him, to take every Word of his as from his own Mouth, every Time the Law is read, as if thou heard it from Mount *Sinai*. So think, "Now God commands me to fear him," as if you heard him ſpeaking from Heaven; that would level more our Opinion of Men, and make leſs Difference of his Meſſengers.

Another

Another Word of his Stile is here added, *the holy One of Iſrael.* This is much to be conſidered by his People, the Holineſs of his Nature, and withal the Nearneſs of his Relation to them; and ſo the Reverence and Obedience we owe him, our deep Engagement to Holineſs, as his People, his Children. This is his Image in us, if we are truly ſuch. All his Sons and Daughters are like him, holy as he is holy. The blind baſe World thinks it a Word of Diſgrace, but the great God owns it as a chief Point of his Glory, a Diamond of his Crown, and frequently expreſſes it as one of the Titles he moſt delights to be known by, *Holy, Holy, Holy.* And as this is beheld, the Heart cannot but be filled with Reverence and holy Fear, and Self-abaſement; as this Prophet here, in ſeeing the Viſion, *Chap.* xvi. and hearing that Voice, *Then ſaid I, Wo is me, for I am undone.*

This is here uſed fitly, to ſcar his People from Rebellion, the unholy Way, on which they were ſo bent; and the rather, becauſe they were grown weary of it, and deſired not to hear this Word, *Ver.* 11. therefore the more repeated, *Ver.* 12. *Becauſe you deſpiſe this Word, you ſhall hear it the more.* The Prophet will neither be mocked nor threatned out of it, will both deliver his Meſſage, and give the King that ſent him his own Title; and Oh! that we knew him, according to it, underſtood what this means, *the holy One of Iſrael.* He was a holy Man, and knew ſomething, yet confeſſes his own Ignorance in that Point: There muſt be ſome Knowledge of it, to diſcover Ignorance of it, *Prov.* xxx. 3. *I neither learned Wiſdom, nor have the Knowledge of the Holy.*

In Returning and Reſt, &c.] In leaving off the Pains ye take in Meſſages and Journies to *Egypt,* in humbly and quietly compoſing yourſelf to wait

on

on me, and truſt on me; ſubmitting to my Hand, in what I bring upon you, and from the ſame Hand, mine alone, expecting Deliverance in due Time. This does not bar the Uſe of all lawful Means, but as it ſhuts out perplexing Cares and Turmoil, even in thoſe good Means, ſo it expreſly forbids all intermeddling with all unwarranted Ways, ſuch as God doth not direct us to, but rather diſſuade us from.

And if this be the ſafeſt Way, ſure it is the ſweeteſt eaſieſt Way: There cannot be any thing eaſier than to be quiet and ſit ſtill, to reſt and truſt, and ſo be ſafe and ſtrong; and as it is in this Particular, ſo generally it is in all the Ways of God; they are the only eaſy, peaceable, ſweet Ways, the leaſt Pains, and ſureſt Advantage. And the Ways of Diſobedience, beſides what comes after, are, even for preſent, more turbulent, laborious perplexed Ways. What a Hurry and Pother are Men put in, to ſerve their Luſts, or their Ambition; which if they attain, does not quit the Coſt and the Pains: Beſides that, often their Hopes mock them; and after long Purſuit, they embrace a Shadow. Thus Men woo their own Vexation, and take a great deal of more Pains to be miſerable, than they ſhould be put to, to make them happy. What a Pity, to pay ſo dear for nothing, to give their Riches and Treaſures, and to be at Pains too, to carry them to a People that ſhall not profit them, * both their Expence and Travel laid out to no Purpoſe? The voluptuous, or covetous, or ambitious, how do they project and drudge, and ſerve their wretched Luſts, that when they have done one Piece of Service, are ſtill to begin another? And what is the Profit of all, Shame and Sorrow at laſt? The humble ſober-minded Chriſtian ſaves all

 that

* *Et oleum & operam.*

that Pains, and hath his Heart's Deſire in Quietneſs and Confidence *. His great Deſire and Delight is God; by deſiring and delighting he hath him, *Pſal.* xxxvii. 4. *Delight thou in the Lord, and he ſhall give thee thy Heart's Deſire, HIMSELF*; and then ſure thou ſhalt have All: Any other thing *commit to him, and he ſhall bring it to paſs* †.

Strange! Men might have God at an eaſier Rate than the pooreſt Vanities they are hunting after, and yet they will not; a full Fountain of living Waters ready provided, yet will be at Pains to hew out ſcurvy Ciſterns, that, after all their Pains, are but *broken Ciſterns, and can hold no Water.*

I know not what Men are doing, ſtill at Work, and might better ſit ſtill, troubling themſelves, and all about them, and cannot well tell for what. Oh! the ſweet Peace of believing and obeying God; they truly conquer ſitting ſtill ||, in all Times they are ſafe under the Shadow of the Almighty, and *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might.*

And ye would not, but ſaid, No.] Thus Men ſometimes flatly reject his Counſels; and when they are not ſo groſs as plainly to ſpeak it out, yet ſay ſo, in doing ſo, and for good Manners ſake will blanch it with reproaching the Meſſengers, will not have it to be God's Mind, but Mens own Fancy, a falſe Viſion, will own nothing for Truth but what ſuits their Humour and Deſign. Firſt, they reſolve on their Courſe without acquainting God, ask not his Advice: Then, when he is pleaſed to give it by his Meſſengers, they reject it, not under that Name, as *God's Advice*, but will not have it paſs for this, becauſe it croſſes their already-determined Courſe; if it

* *Vacat temperantia.* Sen.

† *Sed, non habebunt requiem, qui beſtiam adorant.*

|| *Varro de Romanis conſilio cuncta agentibus,* Sedendo vincebant.

it favoured that, then no Queſtion, welcome enough, as his Word, that is meant by theſe Words, *Ver.* 10. And ſo they uſed *Jeremiah* long after, in this very Point, *Jer.* xlii. 2. And ſo they go on to take their own Courſe, *No, but we will flee upon Horſes.*

And this is the Nature of carnal Hearts, generally inclined to rebel, and take a Way of their own, caſting the Counſels of God, as not ſuiting with the State, Wit, or Points of Honour: They find more Feeling and real Subſtance in ſenſual Things than in the Promiſes of God; theſe ſeem airy unſure Things to them, therefore they would ſtill ſee apparent Means, and where theſe fail, think it but a Fancy to reſt on God, dare not truſt him ſo but as withal to do for themſelves, although nothing can be done but what he forbids, which therefore cannot be done, without giving up with him, and departing from their Truſt on him. All this cleaves to us, and much Cauſe have we to ſuſpect ourſelves, when 'tis but doubtful that there appears little or no Evidence of God's Counſel or Good-will to a Buſineſs, but rather clear Characters of his Diſlike. And much of our own Will, a ſtout uncontroulable Bent to it, conſcious to ourſelves of this, that either we have not ask'd Advice of God at all, or very ſlightly, not being much upon our Knees with it; or, poſſibly, in asking his Advice, have brought our Anſwer with us, in our own Breaſts, the lying Oracle, that making Anſwer, and we conſenting to delude ourſelves, not hearkning to any thing that does not clink and ſound to our Purpoſe.

Our Hearts are exceedingly deceitful, and particularly in this Point of withdrawing our Truſt from God, and following him in his Ways, to truſt on the Arm of Fleſh, on Policy and Strength, and Self-reſolved Undertakings, rather than on him without theſe. Ill Men think thoſe that adviſe them to truſt

on God, are ſilly Fellows, knows not what belongs to Policy and Reaſons of State; a fancied Wiſdom it is, that Men are enamoured with, and look not to a higher Wiſdom, conſider not God, that *he alſo is wiſe*, Iſa. xxxi. 2. There is, I think, in that Word a part Scorn of the Folly of their ſeeming Wiſdom. Be it you are Wits, yet you will not deny ſome Wiſdom to God; *yet he alſo is wiſe*. So they think not on his Power neither; therefore he puts them in Mind that *the Egyptians are Men*, &c. *Ver.* 3.

Well, if you be reſolved on that Courſe, ſays God, then know mine too, that I am reſolved upon: Therefore *ye ſhall flee*, ſhall have fleeing enough; and if you be *ſwift*, *they that purſue you ſhall be ſwifter*, and *one* ſhall ſerve to *chaſe a thouſand*, the Rebuke, the very Terror of one. This is the Condition of the mightieſt People and beſt appointed Armies, when forſaken of God. There is no Strength nor Courage, nor any thing of Worth in any of the Creatures, but as it is derived from God; it is dependent on him in the Continuance and Uſe of it. Why are the valiant Men ſwept away? *Jer.* xlvi. 15. *They ſtood not, becauſe the Lord did drive them.* We have ſeen this, and the Turn of it on both Sides, how Men become a Prey to any Party, when the Terror from God is upon them.

Therefore learn we to fear him, to beware of all Ways, wherein we may juſtly apprehend him to be againſt us, cleave to him and to his Truth, when it is loweſt, and when no human Means of Help appear, then think you hear him ſaying to you, *Stand ſtill and ſee the Salvation of the Lord.*

Ver. 18. *Therefore will the Lord wait*, &c.] There is no Language of Men nor Angels fit to expreſs the Graciouſneſs of God's Puniſhments, and the Threatnings of them, as if it were violently drawn and forced from him; but Mercy, and the ſweet Promiſes

miſes thereof, naturally flowing from him. Thus, here, he is forced to *give up his People to their own Counſels*, becauſe they will not follow his Advices; and entreats but to be quiet, and let him do for them: But ſeeing they will not ſit ſtill, and be ſafe at his Direction, they muſt run their own Courſe, and fall in it. But it cannot paſs ſo, they muſt not be quite given over; the Lord hath an Intereſt in them that he will not loſe. They muſt indeed for a Time eat the Fruit of their own Ways, and that is not a Seaſon to ſhew them Favour; but the Lord will wait a better Hour, he is reſolved to ſhew them Mercy, and will find his own Time for it; therefore will he *wait, that he may be gracious.*

And this is he moved to, according to his gracious Nature, by the Greatneſs of their Diſtreſs and Deſolation, though procured by themſelves, their great, their inflexible Stubbornneſs; yet he pities to ſee them ſo *left as a Beacon on the Top of a Mountain*, &c. *Therefore*, &c. Thus we have the proper Arguings of free Mercy, which otherwiſe, to our narrow Thoughts, may ſeem ſtrange, and ſomewhat inconſequent: Such a *Therefore* as this ſo unexpectedly changing the Strain, doth genuinely and ſweetly follow upon the Premiſſes, when free Love is the Medium; that interveening in the Midſt, makes the ſweet Turn, " Your Iniquities prevail to bring you " low, and lengthen out your Calamities; therefore " I will let that have its Courſe, and will ſtay till " my fit Time come to do you Good. Mean while " I will ly hid, and be as ſitting ſtill; but when " that Time comes, I will get up and ſhew myſelf." He will be exalted, that he may have Mercy on you; for the Lord is a God of Judgment, he is wiſe, and juſt, and good, and knows his Meaſures of afflicting his People, his Times and Ways of delivering them, and bringing Deſtruction on his Enemies, and

will

will not ſlip this Seaſon; and it being ſo, this certainly follows, that they are *bleſſed that wait on him.*

Obſer. 1. The ſtrong Inclination of God to ſhew Mercy: He would willingly have his People to find nothing but Eaſe; *delights* in the Proſperity of his Servants, would have them conſtantly have a ſweet, peaceful, yea, chearful Life, by conſtant walking in his Ways: But they are often the Enemies of their own Peace, grieve his Spirit, and turn him to be their Enemy. But he cannot perſiſt in that to his own; he longs to be at his Way of Mercy and loving Kindneſs again; he *retains not his Anger for ever*, becauſe Mercy pleaſes him; he inflicts Judgment for Sin, but that he delights in is Mercy: Therefore, ſays the Prophet, *Lam.* iii. *Though he cauſe Grief, yet he will have Compaſſion, according to the Multitude of his Mercies: For he doth not willingly afflict, nor grieve the Children of Men.* Though he doth *grieve them*, yet *not willingly*; they themſelves procure and draw on that, by *grieving his Spirit*, but he willingly ſhews Mercy, for that abounds. There is ſuch Multitude and Plenty of it, that, as to full Breaſts, it is a Pleaſure to him to let it forth. The two Words, *gracious* and *merciful*, that ſtand firſt in the Name of God, *Exod.* xxxiv. 6. the one ſignifies *free Grace*, the other *tender Bowels of Mercy*. This is no Emboldment to continue in Sin, yea it is of all Things the moſt fit Encouragement and Inducement to a Sinner to return from his Sin; and ſo it is uſed and urged throughout the Scriptures, *Iſa.* xxxi. 5, 6. and lv. 7. *Jer.* iii. 12. In publick Calamities, were a People charging the Cauſe thereof upon themſelves, ſearching their Hearts and their Ways, and turning in to God, humbly acknowledging their Iniquity, and entreating Pardon. Oh! this is the Thing he would not deſpiſe; yea, 'tis that he looks

and

and longs for, and upon that would readily forget all paſt Diſloyalties, *Jer.* iii. 1. Yea, at the Sound of their Repentings, his Bowels would reſound with Compaſſion by a ſecret Sympathy and Harmony, as one String well tun'd to another, ſtirs when it is touched. Thus, *Jer.* xxxi. 18, 19, 20.

This a Sinner ſhall find in his returning unto God, more than we can expreſs or promiſe in his Name. Oh! *He waits to be gracious*, meets thee graciouſly, yea, hath firſt touch'd thine Heart ſecretly, firſt drawn it towards himſelf, before it ſtir'd, or had a Thought that Way. Now, no more Upbraidings, or Remembrance of all thy Wandrings, an Act of perfect Oblivion is paſt, *Jer.* xxxi. 34. Is thy Heart any little ſoftned, and relents towards him? Then the Controverſy is ended, and his Thoughts are now, how to comfort thee. Art thou buſy indicting Accuſations againſt thyſelf? then makes he it his Part, to wipe away and blot out. Comeſt thou home with a Heart full of holy Shame and Grief, and thy Mouth full of humble Confeſſions of thy Diſobedience? Then know 'tis thy tender-hearted Father meets thee, moſt ready to forgive thee; yea, to interrupt thy Confeſſions in the middle with Embraces and Kiſſes of Love.

But, alas! we prejudge ourſelves of the ſweet Experiences of theſe tender Mercies, by the Hardneſs of our Hearts, and by the Lightneſs and Vanity of them. Oh that Indignity! Our God ſtill *waiting to be gracious*, to heap up more of his Love to us; but we are buſied in other Things, and not at leiſure to wait on him. Oh! what are they? Theſe Things that take us up; great Matters! Alas! ſorry Trifles, all Day long, and when we are at Leiſure, yet are not at Leiſure; for then we muſt take our Eaſe, muſt go to Sleep; and ſo ſtill he is put off and forced to retire, after he ſtay'd till *his Head be filled*

with

with Dew, and his Locks with the Drops of the Night.

Obſer. 2. The Lord doth moſt exactly and wiſely meaſure both the Degree and the Time of his People's Afflictions, though they have brought them upon themſelves; and juſtly he might leave them ſo. This he will not do, he is a God of Judgment. This is largely and ſweetly expreſt, in a Reſemblance of Husbandry, *Iſa.* xxviii. 24. *ad ult.* He knows how much and how long outward or inward Trouble is fit for every one; and where the leſs will ſerve, will not uſe the more; knows what Need ſome Spirits have to be bruiſed and broken beyond others, either under Diſgrace or Poverty, or the proper Preſſures of the Spirit within, Apprehenſions of Wrath, or Withdrawments, at leaſt, of Comforts, and hath ſet his Days for Deliverance of his Church, and of every Believer under Affliction; ſo the Stile of the Prophet, *In that Day*, ſpeaking as of a certain prefix'd Day, and that no Power or Wit of Man can diſappoint: And it is ſo choſen, as it ſhall be evident to be the fitteſt, that it could not ſo well either have been ſooner or later; all Things concurring to make it moſt ſeaſonable to his People, and honourable to his own Name. *The Viſion for the appointed Time*, Hab. ii. 3. *though it tarry, wait for it, it ſhall come, and ſhall not tarry.* That is ſtrange, *though it tarry, it ſhall not tarry.* But in the Original there are two Words, the one importing an undue Slowneſs, or conſtrained Retardment, that cannot be ſo, *it ſhall not tarry. Though it tarry*, that is, though it ſtay itſelf, and come not till the *appointed Time:* So the other Word ſignifies; thus, *Pſal.* cii. 13. *He will ariſe, and have Mercy upon Zion; for the ſet Time is come.* Now, for this the Lord waits: 'Tis not Want of Love, but Abundance of Wiſdom, that he delivers not ſooner, hath choſen the fitteſt Time,

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in his all-diſcerning Wiſdom; yet there is in his Love an earneſt kind of longing that the Time were come. Thus here, *he waits to be gracious*, and will be exalted, will chearfully and gladly raiſe up himſelf, and appear to ſhew Mercy to his People, and bring his Enemies low; coming forth, as it were, to Judgment, and ſitting down on his Throne, in which Poſture he was not ſeen while they prevailed and triumphed, and his Church was under their Oppreſſion; but when the Time of their Reſtoring and Conſolation comes, he then is to ſit on his Throne, and ſo is exalted to ſhew them Mercy. Hence the Pſalmiſt ſo often deſires, that the Lord would ariſe, *Pſal.* lxxvi. 10. xiv. 22. and utters Predictions, aſſuring that he will ariſe; and exciting his People to rejoice in that, *Pſal.* ix. 7, 8. and *Pſal.* xcvi. xcvii. and xcviii.

Thus the Church in her ſaddeſt Condition ought hopefully to remember and reſt on it, that the Day is determined, and cannot fail. Our Salvation is in God; he laughs at his Enemies, when they are in the Top of Proſperity and Pride, ſees that their Day is coming. Now, certainly the firm Perſuaſion of this would much ſtay our Minds; but either we do not believe, or do not improve, and uſe theſe Truths, and draw that Comfort from them, that abounds in them. Our God loſes no Time; *He is waiting, till his appointed Time*; and if *he wait*, it becomes us ſo to do: That is our Duty here, *to wait on him*; this Faith does, and ſo makes not Haſte, neither goes out to any undue Means, nor frets impatiently within, at the deferring of Deliverance, but quietly reſts on God, and waits for him. This, as it is our Duty, ſo our Happineſs, and ſo it is here expreſt. Upon Conſideration, that *the Lord waits to be gracious*, and will be exalted to ſhew Mercy, the Prophet is

carried to this Acclamation, to the Happineſs of Believers:

O! bleſſed they that wait for him!

Their Thoughts fall in, and meet with his: For he is *waiting* for the ſame Day they *wait* for; and if he be not diſappointed, they ſhall not. We are naturally irregular in our Affections and Notions; and the only ordering of them, is by reducing them to a Conformity with the Ways and Thoughts of God, that keep an unalterable fixed Courſe, as the Heavens: The Way, I ſay, to rectify our Thoughts is, to ſet them by his, as Clocks and Watches, that ſo readily go wrong, too ſlow or too faſt, are ordered by the Sun, that keeps its Courſe. Oh! that we were more careful to ſet and keep our Hearts in Attendance on God, winding them up in Meditation of him, and conforming them in their Motions and Deſires to his Diſpoſe in all, for all that concerns us, and for the Times of all, being quiet, yea, glad in this, that the Pſalmiſt makes his Joy, *My Times are in thy Hands, O Lord*; and ſure that is the beſt. Were I to chuſe, they ſhould be in no other Hands, neither mine own, nor any others. Alas! what ſilly poor Creatures are we? How little do we know what is fit for us in any Kind? and leſs what Time is fit for any Mercy to be beſtowed upon us. When he with-holds Mercies or Comforts for a Seaſon, it is but the due Seaſon; it is but to ripen them for us, which we in childiſh Haſte would pluck green, when they would neither be ſo ſweet nor ſo wholeſome. Therefore it is our Wiſdom and our Peace to reſign all Things into his Hands, to have no Will nor Deſires, but only of this, that we may ſtill *wait for him*: All ſhall be well enough, if we be but rid of the vain Hopes and Expectations of this World: None who

who indulge them are ſo well, but they are ſtill waiting for ſomewhat further. Now, amidſt all that, our Soul may ſay with *David*, and ſpeak it to God, as known to him, that it is ſo indeed: *And now, Lord, what wait I for? My Hope is in thee:* My *Expectation*, or *Waiting*, the ſame Word that is here, *is all placed upon thee.* Is it ſo, Brethren? Are our Hearts gathered in from other Things, to this Attendance, while the moſt about us are gaping for the Wind? Have we laid all up in God, to deſire and *wait for him*, and pretend to nothing beſide him?

I would do ſo, may a Soul think; but can I hope that he will look on me, and beſtow himſelf on ſuch a one as I am? To that I ſay nothing, but look on his Word: If thou thinkeſt that Warrant good enough, here 'tis for thee, that they are certainly *bleſſed that wait for him.* This is Aſſurance enough. Never was any that *waited for him* miſerable with Diſappointment. Whoſoever thou art that doſt indeed deſire him, and deſireſt to *wait for him*, ſure thou reſolveſt to do it in his Ways, wherein he is to be found, and wilt not willingly depart from theſe; that were fooliſhly to prejudge thyſelf, and not to be true to thy own End. Therefore look to that, do not keep Company with any Sin; it may ſurprize thee ſometimes as an Enemy, but let it not lodge with thee as a Friend.

And mind this other Thing, preſcribe nothing to God: If thou haſt begun to *wait*, faint not, give not up, *wait on* ſtill: 'Twere good Reaſon, were it but upon little Hope, at length to find him; but ſince it is upon unfailing Aſſurance, that in End thou ſhalt obtain, what Folly were it, to loſe all, for want of waiting a little longer? See *Pſal.* xl. 1. *In waiting I waited, waited and better waited*, but all was overpaid; he did hear me: So *Pſal.* cxxx. *I wait and wait, until the Morning:* Theſe two joined are all, and

may well go together, *earneſt Deſire*, and *patient Attendance*.

Theſe Words, as others of the Prophet, we call *Conſolations*, I conceive, look beyond the Deliverances from outward Troubles, to the great Promiſe of the *Meſſias*: Sure I am, the Strain of ſomething following is too high for that, and cannot but have an Aſpect to the Days of the Goſpel, as that, *Ver.* 26. Now, the Lord *hath* ſet his Time, that *Fulneſs of Time* for the Coming of the bleſſed Son in the Fleſh, and till that Time *came*, the Lord was *waiting to be gracious*, to open up his Treaſures more fully than ever before; which when he did, then was he exalted to ſhew Mercy, and exalted in ſhewing Mercy: Chriſt himſelf was lifted up on the Croſs, there to ſhew that rich Mercy that is for ever to be admired; lifted up, to ſhew his Bowels, as the Word is here. Did he not let us ſee into his Heart, there to read that Love that can no otherwiſe be uttered? And in that the Lord was moſt eminently manifeſted a God of Judgment, Wiſdom, and Juſtice, and Mercy, all ſhining brighteſt in that Contrivement. There he was liſt up, and then after that liſt up into Glory, that is the *Deſire of the Nations*, the Salvation and Joy of all Ages, both before and after. Before he came, they were from one Age to another *waiting*, and more particularly at the Time of his Coming; God ſtirring up the Expectation of Believers to welcome him, being ſo near, *Luke* ii. 25, 38. And in all Times, before and after that he is the Happineſs of Souls, and they only are bleſſed that wait for him. Whether you do, or do not believe it now, the Day is coming, when all the World ſhall know it to be ſo.

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SERMON VIII.

JEREMIAH XIV. 7, 8, 9.

O Lord, though our Iniquities teſtify againſt us, do thou it for thy Name's ſake; for our Blackſlidings are many, we have ſinned againſt thee.

O the Hope of Iſrael, the Saviour thereof in time of Trouble, why ſhouldeſt thou be as a Stranger in the Land, and as a Way-faring Man, that turneth aſide to tarry for a Night?

Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a Man aſtonied, as a mighty Man that cannot ſave? yet thou, O Lord, art in the Midſt of us, and we are called by thy Name, leave us not.

IF we look backwards and forwards in this Chapter, we find the three great Executioners of God's Anger on the World foretold, as having received Commiſſion againſt this People.

In all Troubles felt or feared, this is ſtill the great Recourſe of them that are acquainted with it, and can uſe it, PRAYER. And their Labour in it is not altogether loſt, even where the Judgment is determined and unalterable, as here it was; for ſome Mitigations of Time and Meaſure are deſirable, and by Prayer attainable: And whatſoever there is of that Kind, the Prayers that have been made long before, have had a Concurrence and Influence in it, and always at the leaſt, Prayer carries the perſonal Good of them that preſent it; if it return unto their Boſom, as *David* ſpeaks, without Effect for others, it returns not thither empty, brings Peace and Safety thither with it, they ſave their own Souls. The Mourners, if

they

they turn not away the Deſtroyers Weapons from the City, yet they procure one ſent along with an Inkhorn with their own marking and ſparing. And were there nothing in this, nor any following Effect, Prayer hath within itſelf its own Reward: Did we know it, we would think ſo. The very Dignity and Delight of ſo near Acceſs to God, to ſpeak with him ſo freely, this in itſelf is the moſt bleſſed and honourable Privilege that the Creature is capable of; it is a Pledge of Heaven, ſomething of it beforehand, a ſtanding in Pretenſion to the Life of Angels*, (to be but *a little lower*, as the Word is, *Pſal.* viii.) Many practiſe a Form, few know the vital Sweetneſs of it.

Oh! my Brethren, be aſpiring to more Heavenlineſs, and an higher Bent of the Soul in it than yet you know, and uſe it more that Way, uſe it for yourſelves and others, this whole Land, theſe Kingdoms, the Church of God through the whole Earth. No Times that we have ſeen wherein it hath been more needful, and none wherein leſs plentiful; none that *ſtirs up himſelf to lay hold on God.* Some, no doubt there are in theſe Times; yet ſo few, ſo general a Decay and Negligence in the Zeal and Frequency of Prayer, that to ſpeak of there is none. And is it not ſo now with us? Many diſcourſe one to another, and yet moſt to little or no purpoſe; but little is ſpoken where nothing would be loſt, in humble Supplication to God: And this is the ſaddeſt Sign of that long laſting Trouble. Oh! pity the Kingdom and yourſelves, and learn to pray.

This Prayer of the Prophet is made up of the two uſual Ingredients, *Confeſſion* and *Petition.*

O Lord, Jehovah.] A chief Point of Prayer is the preſenting of the Soul before God, remembring to whom we ſpeak, that it is to the great King, the holy

* *Angelorum candidati.* Tertull.

holy God, which this expreſſes, where it is indeed, when we ſay, *O LORD*, or ſhould remind us of, when we forget it, to have ſuch Apprehenſions as we can reach, of his glorious Majeſty. Conſider, if we find our Hearts filled with him when we are before him. Oh! how ſeldom think we that he is God, even while we ſpeak to him, and how quickly do we forget it, and let ſlip that Thought, when we have any thing of it, how ſoon are we out of it, and multiplying vain Words; for ſo are all theſe we utter to him without this. Oh! pray to be taught this Point of Prayer, and watch over your Hearts in Prayer, to ſet them thus, when you enter to him, and to call them in when they wander, and pluck them up when they ſlumber, to think where they are, and what they are doing.

Our Iniquities teſtify againſt us.] Confeſſion fitly begins. All the Difference betwixt God and us lies in this, *our Iniquities*. Now, humble Confeſſion is one great Article of Pacification, it is a Thing Judgment certainly aims at, *Hoſ.* v. 15. a Thing Mercy is mainly moved with, *Pſal.* xxxii. 5. *Jer.* xxxi. 18.

When we are to encounter any Enemy or Difficulty, it is Sin weakens us: Now, Confeſſion weakens it, takes away the Power of Accuſations, anticipates the great Accuſer, leaves him nothing to ſay, takes off the Stroke of Sins, teſtifying againſt us, ſays, "You need not, I confeſs all, and more than you "can ſay."

For this, a right Knowledge of God's Law is requiſite, and then a diligent Uſe of it; laying it to our Ways, as a ſtraight Rule to ſhew our Unevenneſs, which without it we diſcern not: Set that Glaſs before you; but, withal, beg Light from Heaven to ſee by, otherwiſe our Applications to this Work of *ſearching our Hearts*, and comparing them with the Law, is but poring in the Dark, where nothing is to be ſeen of our Spots,

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though we ſet the the Glaſs before us, and open the Leaves of it. *The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*; but it is ſo when he lights it, and directs a Man by it in to himſelf, to ſee the ſecret Corners and Pollutions that ly hid within him: Sin diſcovered by this Light, appears in its native Likeneſs, and that makes lively Reſentments and Confeſſions.

Their Confeſſion of Sin varied here in three ſeveral Expreſſions, none of them empty; the adding one to another, teſtifying a deep Senſe, and each of them having much under it, when iſſuing from an awakened ſenſible Mind.

Our Iniquities teſtify againſt us. This expreſſes a deep and clear Convincement. Our Iniquities are undeniable; they ſtand up and give in Witneſs againſt us, and we cannot except againſt them, nor deny the Charge they lay.

And thus it ſhall be with all Tranſgreſſors in their Day, and each of us. 'Tis not far off, our particular Day, 'tis coming, when the moſt ignorant ſhall be forced to know, and the moſt obſtinate and impudent ſhall be forced to acknowledge their Iniquities. Such as now will not be warned and convinced, that hide their Sin as Men, as *Adam*, that ſhew themſelves in that his Children, they (as he) ſhall be called for, and forced to come out of the Thickets, and convicted of their Diſobedience. This Men find ſometimes in a Day of Diſtreſs, when ſome outward or inward Preſſure ſeizes on them, lays on the Arreſt, and brings them to ſtand and hear what theſe Witneſſes have to ſay againſt them. However, there is a Day coming for this at the Long-run, a Day of particular Judgment for each one, and that great ſolemn Day for all together; the Light of that fiery Day ſhall let them ſee to read the Bill they would not look on ſooner.

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If Men would conſider this, when Sin is ſpeaking them fair, and enticing them, in how different a Stile it will afterwards ſpeak, it would ſpoil the Charm of it, as *Solomon* ſpeaks of the *ſtrange Woman*, *Prov.* v. 34. So are all the Ways of Sin, thoſe ſame Sins that look'd ſo pleaſing and friendly, and entreated thee, ſhall appear again in another Tune, and with other Language, to witneſs againſt thee, and cry for Vengeance. Men think Sin evaniſhes as it is acted, and forget it as if they were to hear no more of it, and know not that it ſhall all be forthcoming again, even Thoughts, Words and Actions: All is kept for a Court-day; *Iniquities ſeal'd up in a Bag*, as *Job* ſpeaks, as Writs to be produced in the Proceſs againſt thee. Oh! how little know you, what the Amazement is, of a Man's Sins ſurrounding him, and teſtifying againſt him, that he is a Rebel againſt God, and to be condemned; and no Scarcity, ſuch Multitudes of them, one Company ſucceeding another, as that Word, *Job* x. *Thou reneweſt thy Witneſſes againſt me*, not by twos or threes, but thouſands, Armies of them. This is more affrightful than to be encompaſs'd with drawn Swords, or to ſee a whole Army march up upon a Man, it were nothing to theſe Bands muſtered up, *Pſal.* l. 21.

There is no way to eſcape but by Prevention, taking a Day before-hand to judge thyſelf, and call theſe Witneſſes, and hear them, and paſs Sentence; this would ſave the Labour. God is deſirous to have the Matter thus anticipated, and turns it over to thee, to judge thyſelf, that he may not judge. Why defer we? Is it not worth the while and the Pains? And then for that Day, when it would ſeem ſo terrible to have theſe Witneſſes ſtand up, thy Safety is, having judged and condemned thyſelf, to take Sanctuary in Chriſt, and make him thy Advocate, to anſwer all for thee: He can and will do it to the

full; yea, he hath already anſwered all that thy Sins, were they many moe, can ſay. O! happy the Man that takes this Courſe. Sin not upon this Account; none ſure will do that. *Theſe Things I write unto you, that ye ſin not:* But then if any Man not ſo minded do ſin, here is that Comfort, *We have an Advocate with the Father, Jeſus Chriſt the righteous.*

Our Backſlidings are many.] This the double Dye of his Peoples Sins, they are not ſimple Tranſgreſſions, but Treacheries, Revolts, Breaches of Promiſes, of Covenant and Vow, Turnings back, Going out from God, Adultery, proſtituting their Hearts to Idols, to baſe Luſts; a Heart profeſſed to be married to its Maker, running a gadding after ſtrange Vanities. And who of us hath not this ſadly to ſay againſt ourſelves? "How often have I vowed myſelf "thine, and with ſome kind of Hopes and Purpoſe to "have been true to it; but how ſoon hath all evaniſh-"ed?" Oh! the unſpeakable Unfaithfulneſs, not only of common formal Profeſſors, but of real Believers. And theſe provoke God highly, go moſt to his Heart, to be ſlighted by his own, to whom he hath ſo particularly ſhewn himſelf, and imparted of his Love.

And we have ſinned againſt thee.] This that comes laſt ſeems to ſound leaſt; but I take it as meaning moſt, as if they would have offered at particular Confeſſion; and then ſeeing ſuch a huge Multitude, and no End, were forced to retire, and ſhut up all in this general Word, "We might and would ſpeak "of many Things, but they are too many, we are "overwhelmed; what ſhall we ſay? *We have ſinned* "*againſt thee.*" Thus *Job, I have ſinned againſt thee, what ſhall I do unto thee.* As in *David*'s Confeſſion, *Pſal.* li. *THEE*, the great, the holy God, our God. This were our Buſineſs, inſtead of much Diſcourſe and Debate of Things, to fall down and confeſs unto God. Begin at ourſelves, our own Breaches

and

and Backſlidings, and then add the publick national Guiltineſs. Oh! we are a ſinful People, and few to lay it to heart: All Ranks are highly guilty; and where are they that retire and mourn for their Abominations? thoſe, continued and multiplied, are the Continuers and Multipliers of our Plagues, Sword and Peſtilence, and Threatnings of Famine. If you have a Mind to do any thing for the Land, and for yourſelves, your Families and little ones, Oh! apply to this Work, to confeſs and bewail our Iniquities, it may be, yea, I dare ſay, it ſhall be, *the Lord will return and have Mercy on us.*

O Lord, though our Iniquities teſtify againſt us.] In all our Approaches unto God, it is a prime Thing to take him up according to his Name: This is the very Ground of the Acceſs and Confidence of Sinners, and there is no coming near him without it. We have heard it, that *he is the Lord, merciful and gracious*, &c. Not ſo much as Confeſſions can be made without this, much leſs Petitions preſented; inſtead of coming to fall down before him, to acknowledge Sin, the Soul would run quite away, and though that were in vain, would ſeek to hide itſelf, that it might not at all appear. But apprehending his Goodneſs and Readineſs to forgive, this draws the Heart to him; and being drawn in, this makes it melt before him. In this ſome Chriſtians miſtake much, when they hold off from the Apprehenſions of God's Graciouſneſs, to the end that they may be the more humble and deeply affected with their Sins: No, no; this is that which warms, and ſoftens, and makes the Soul pliable, fit to receive any Form from his Hand: Therefore the People of God, and the Prophets in their Name, ſtill lay hold on that, and interweave it both with their Confeſſions and Petitions, as the main Ground of their Confidence in preſenting both.

The Petition is in theſe two Words, that begin and cloſe, *Do for us*; *Leave us not*. The reſt is Argument, backing and preſſing the Petition with familiar and pathetical Expoſtulations; and in them the whole Strength of the Argument lies in a mutual Intereſt, *that they are his People, and he is their God*. But take the Words as they ly.

Do thou for thy Name's ſake.] It is not expreſt *what* or *how*, and it is beſt ſo; that is referred to him that knows what is beſt, which we do not. It is in general an Act of Grace that is ſuited for; but, for Way and Time, all is put in his Hand. True it is, that ſometimes Prayer is and muſt be ſomewhat more particular, upon particular Warrant, or upon Account of the common Liberty that God gives his Children, to preſent freely the particular Thoughts and Deſires of their Hearts to him; but it is good always to cloſe thus, or that it be underſtood ſo, when not expreſt, that we reſign that Matter to him, to make his own Choice of Things, and uſe his own Way: Only we entreat his Favour, and owning of us, and our Condition, that he *be for us*, and *do for us*; and this is ſafe and ſweet, to let him chuſe. We often perplex ourſelves about that which lies not in our Way, and is not our Part to be buſied in, what Things ſhall be done. This he undertakes for, and will be careful of: Be not afraid. *Pſal.* xxxvii. 5. *Commit thy Way*, roll thy Way upon the Lord, truſt on the Lord, and he will do it; there is no more in the *Hebrew*, "Turn it over to "him, and be quiet, and let him alone, he will do "well enough." Beſides, that is all Reaſon, if Men knew what Peace of Spirit there is in this Reſignment, they would chuſe it before any Way that can be thought on, and it never yet repented any that choſe it.

For

For thy Name's ſake.] This the unfailing Argument, that abides always the ſame, and hath always the ſame Force, when nothing is to be ſaid for ourſelves but Guiltineſs; yet this Name we may plead by, *though our Iniquities teſtify againſt us*, as the *Hebrew* Word is: "Though they return us harſh An-"ſwers, as from thee, ſpeaking nothing but juſt Re-"fuſes of our Suits, and rejecting of ourſelves; yet, "Lord, remember thy own Name; and from thence "we look for a better Anſwer: *Do* according to "that, and *for thy Name's ſake*, in regard of Stran-"gers and Enemies, that will reproach thy Name, "in the Ruin of thy People, and *thy Name's ſake*, "in regard of thy Peoples Knowledge of it, and "Confidence in it, that in all their Straits do expect "their Help from thee; thy Promiſes made to them, "and Covenant made with them: In theſe is *thy* "*Name*, and they do caſt themſelves, and rely on "it. Now ſee, whether it may be for thy Glory to "caſt them off: Whatſoever *we* are, look to thy "own Intereſt, and *do for that*; *Do for thy Name's* "*ſake.*"

In the next Clauſe, and more particularly, a Part of his Name is expreſt, *the Hope of Iſrael*; that is a Piece of his Royal Stile, by which he is known in the World: And in this appeareth the wonderful Condeſcendence and Bounty of God to his Creatures, to chuſe a Number of Perſons, that he will paſs his Word to engage himſelf to be theirs: Not only to forgive us who are his Debters by our Sins, but to become himſelf a Debter to us by his Promiſes; and he loves to be challenged on them, and preſs'd with them. 'Tis a Maxim of Court-Flattery, that mean Perſons ought not to urge a King upon his Word; but this greateſt King takes nothing better from the meaneſt of his Subjects. "Lord, thou haſt "undertaken the Protection of us thy People, and

"now

" now it lies upon thee, in point of Honour and " Truth, to ſave us."

The Hope of Iſrael.] All People, and every Man, have ſomething they rely on and make their Hope, and they often chuſe the moſt broken rotten Hopes, that fail while they lean upon them, and not only fail, but hurt them, as *Egypt* called to *Iſrael:* Therefore it proved as a *broken Reed*, that not only flew in pieces in their Hand, but the Splinter run up into their Hand and hurt them. How often have we found it thus, been diſappointed, yea wounded by our vain Hopes, *pierced through with many Sorrows?* as the Apoſtle ſpeaks of thoſe that love and truſt in Riches: Therefore *Job* diſclaims this, that he never made Gold his God; *If I made Gold my Hope*, Chap. xxxi. 24. There is a Word of one of his Friends ſpeaking, *Chap.* xxii. 25. *The Almighty ſhall be thy Defence*; the Word is, *The Almighty ſhall be thy Gold*. To them that account and make him ſo he is both; for they are rich enough in him in the greateſt Scarcity, and ſafe enough in him in the greateſt Danger.

But you'd look to it: Enquire well what is thy Hope, what thy Heart readieſt turns to, and cleaves to, to comfort itſelf in any Diſtreſs, yea in the Times of the greateſt Eaſe: What are thy Thoughts moſt biaſs'd and turn'd to, with oſteneſt and deepeſt Delight? Canſt thou ſay, 'tis to God? that thy Heart hath got that Retreat, and is inured to that, is frequently there, throughout the Day, turns by, or paſſes over Husband or Wife, or Children, or Riches, or Delights, or any thing would ſtand in thy Way, and ſtays not, till it be at him, and there rejoices in his Love, ſits down under his Shadow content and happy, willing that others ſhould rule and ſhare the World as they pleaſe, that thou doſt not envy them, yea, canſt even pity them, with all their gay Hopes and great Projects; yea, though thou do not find at

all

all Times, yea, poſſibly, ſcarce at any Time, that ſenſible Preſence of God, and ſhining of his clear diſcovered Love upon thee, yet ſtill he is thy Hope, thou art at a Point with all the World, haſt given up all to wait on him, and hope for him, doſt account thyſelf richer in thy ſimple Hope, than the richeſt Man on Earth is in his Poſſeſſions. Then art thou truly ſo, for the Hope of God is Heaven begun, and Heaven compleat is the poſſeſſing of him.

The Saviour, not exempting from *Trouble*, but *ſaving in time of Trouble*. The Reaſon for *Iſrael*'s Trouble lay in their own Sin and Security, and Abuſe of Eaſe and Peace; but yet they were not left to periſh in Trouble, but had *a Saviour in time of Trouble*, who was then moſt eyed and conſidered, and found to be ſo. In the Furnace, both the Faith of his People and the Truth of his Promiſes are tried.

The Children of God were much beholden to their Troubles, for clear Experiences of themſelves and of God; and in this indeed is the Virtue of *Faith*, to apprehend God as *a Saviour in time of Trouble*, before he come forth and manifeſt himſelf to be ſo.

Wicked Men have their *Times of Trouble* too, even here, but have no Title to this *Saviour*. * If themſelves, or Friends, or Means can help them, it is well; but they can go no further. But the Church, the *Iſrael of God*, when all Help fails on all Hands, have one great Recourſe that cannot fail, the ſtrong God, her *Hope and Saviour in time of Trouble*, or Straitneſs: When there is no Way out, he can cut out a Way through the Sea, can divide their Enemies, or whatſoever is their greateſt Difficulty, and make a Way through the Middle of it. Well might he ſay, *Happy art thou, O Iſrael, who is like unto thee, O People ſaved by the Lord, the Shield of thy Help*, &c. Men are Under-Saviours in outward Deliverances, ſo it is ſaid,

* *Sua fortuna fabri.*

ſaid, *He raiſed them up Saviours:* But he is *THE SAVIOUR.* All others have Commiſſions from him: All their Strength, and all their Succeſs, is from him; without him, no Strength, nor Wit, nor Courage, avail: All falls to pieces when he withdraws his Hand, *Give us Help from Trouble*; *for* (ſays the Church) *vain is the Help of Man.* We have found this, if any People ever did, and have had real Lectures, to teach us to *ceaſe from Man*; *for wherein is he to be accounted of?* Yet ſtill we are ready to look to Multitudes, or to the Quality of Men that undertake: But if we do ſo, yet ſhall that prove our Shame and Diſappointment; and it ſhall never go well with us, till our Dependence and Confidence come clear off from all Creatures, and we fix itſelf entirely upon him, who is *our Shield and our Strength.*

Thus ſhould a Soul, in particular Diſtreſs, eſpecially inward, wherein the Help lies moſt incommunicably and immediately in God's own Hand, learn to truſt him; and though thou art not clear in thy Intereſt as a Believer, yet plead thy Intereſt as a Sinner, which thou art ſure of. God in our Fleſh hath enlarged the Nation of *Iſrael:* All that will but *look to him*, he is their Saviour; *Look unto me, and be ſaved, all the Ends of the Earth.* Now he hath ſtiled himſelf *the Saviour* of Sinners; preſs him by that, "Lord, "I do *look to thee*, do for me, O *Saviour*; *help*, I "am in Trouble." So, in any particular Temptation, either to Sin, or to Diſtruſt becauſe of Sin, "Now, Lord, here is an Opportunity for thy Power "and thy Grace to glorify itſelf." And though thou find thyſelf ſinking, yet believe, and thou ſhalt not drown.

Why ſhouldeſt thou be as a Stranger, &c.] The main Thing deſired was his conſtant Abode with them. Some paſſing Deliverances he wrought; but that was not enough, came *as a Stranger, to ſtay a Night*,

Night, refreſh'd them with a tranſient Viſit, and away again. Thus we may ſay, He hath ſtill done for us; when we were in deſperate Straits he came and helped, but then we were left to ſuch Counſels as bred us new Troubles: He hath not ſo evidently yet taken up his Reſidence, though he hath built him an Houſe amongſt us, we truſt, with that Intention, to *dwell with us*. This we are to ſuit and entreat for. *Why art thou as one aſtonied?* looking on our Miſeries as an amazed Stranger, as not concerned in our Affairs or Condition, and not caring what become of us, *as a Traveller*, but paſſing through, and having no further Intereſt nor Regard; or, *a mighty Man that cannot ſave*, as *Samſon* after his Hair was cut, *&c.* *A mighty Man that cannot ſave*, either as wearied or bound, or ſomewhat hindred, though ſtrong enough.

" Now, Lord, look not on, own our Sufferings, " and beſtir thyſelf: Make it appear that *thou faint-* " *eſt not, neither art weary*, nor that any thing can " ſtand before thee and be thy Hindrance. Break " through our Sins, the greateſt Hindrance of all, " let not thoſe ſtop thy Way, nor bind thy Hands; " for thou art in the Midſt of us, though we ſee " thee not ſo in thy Work as we deſire, yet here " we know thou art in thy ſpecial Good-will and " Power, as thou art in our Profeſſion and Homage " done to thee as our King amongſt us; that teſti- " fies thy Preſence. Thou canſt not ſo hide thyſelf, " but there are ſtill ſome Characters of thy Preſence, " and *we are called by thy Name, thy People.* If we " periſh, thy Name being upon us, what becomes " then of it? Therefore leave us not; though thou " ſtrike us, yet ſtay with us, and we ſhall live in " Hope of Favour and Deliverance, if thou go not " away, our Cries and Prayers, at leaſt our Miſe- " ries, will move thee."

Theſe Things make up our Plea. We are a moſt unworthy People, yet called by his Name, in Covenant with him; ſo his Glory is intereſted. We muſt not let go this; and what Advantage ſo great, as to have our Intereſt wrapt up in his? His Glory and our Safety in one Bottom, to ſink and ſwim together, then there is no Hazard. Therefore keep cloſe to his Intereſt and his Covenant, and beg his ſtaying with us, and ariſing for us, and lay hold on him for this End: 'Tis a pleaſant Violence; and were there many to uſe it towards him, our Deliverance were not far off.

SER-

SERMON IX.

LUKE XIII. 1—10.

There were preſent at that Seaſon ſome that told him of the Galileans, whoſe Blood Pilate had mingled with their Sacrifices.

And Jeſus anſwering, ſaid unto them, Suppoſe ye that theſe Galileans were Sinners above all the Galileans, becauſe they ſuffered ſuch Things?

I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

Or thoſe eighteen, upon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, and ſlew them, think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in Jeruſalem?

I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

He ſpake alſo this Parable: A certain Man had a Fig-tree planted in his Vineyard, and he came and ſought Fruit thereon, and found none.

Then ſaid he unto the Dreſſer of his Vineyard, Behold, theſe three Years I come ſeeking Fruit on this Fig-tree, and find none; cut it down, Why cumbereth it the Ground?

And he anſwering, ſaid unto him, Lord, let it alone this Year alſo, till I ſhall dig about it, and dung it:

And if it bear Fruit, well; and if not, then after that thou ſhalt cut it down.

IT is no eaſy or common Thing, to give God's Ways a right Conſtruction; for the moſt part, we either let them paſs unobſerved, or unframe our Obſervations, looking through theſe Principles and Paſſions of our own, that give Things another Shape

or Colour than what is truly theirs. This was here the Caſe. This ſad Accident ſhould have been obſerved by them that heard it, and might have been ſpoken of by them to very good Purpoſe; but our Saviour knew well what they meant by reporting the Story, and what Thoughts they had of it, and of themſelves, and by his Anſwer, it would ſeem, all was not right with them.

The Fact related we have not any further Account of in ſacred Hiſtory, nor any thing that we can clearly and certainly call it in any human Writer; it is commonly conceived to have been done at *Jeruſalem*, where *Pilate* abode, and his Power was exerciſed and done upon the Followers of that *Judas* of *Galilee*, ſpoken of *Acts* v. being ſuch as denied it to be lawful to give Obedience to the *Roman* Empire, or to offer Sacrifice for the Intereſt and Good of it: When they, it is likely, were coming together to offer at *Jeruſalem*, and to maintain and to ſpread their Opinion, *Pilate* comes upon them, and while they were at the Solemnity, makes a Sacrifice of them to that Authority they refuſed to ſacrifice for; whether juſtly or no, we cannot determine, our Saviour does not: But if it was juſt, ſure it was very tragical and ſevere, ſuitable to that Character *Philo* gives of his Diſpoſition that acted it *. The ſtraining of Juſtice commonly breaks it; a little of the other Side is of the two, doubtleſs, the ſafer Extreme.

However, this Stroke, and all others, as they come from the ſupreme Hand, are righteous, whatſoever be the Temper or Intent of the lower Actor, and whatſoever be the Nature of the Action, as from him, the ſovereign Hand of God is in them, and chief in them, *No Evil in the City but the Lord does it.* And yet all Evils, as he doth them, both are good and well done. Actions, whether voluntary or caſual,

* Ἀμείλικτον.

ſual, as theſe two here, yet do powerfully iſſue from the firſt Being and Worker; and, as from him, are both unalterably certain and unqueſtionably juſt. Thus they that here report it, ſeem to have judged of this Paſſage, that it was a juſt Puniſhment of Sin; and our Saviour conteſts not about that, but rather ſeems to agree to them ſo far, and draws that Warning out of it; only corrects the Miſconceit it ſeems they were in, in thruſting it too far off from themſelves, and throwing it too heavy upon thoſe that ſacrificed.

Think ye that they were Sinners, &c.] Though it were an Error to think that all temporal Evils are intended of God, as Puniſhments of ſome particular Guiltineſs, and ſo be taken, as infallibly concluding againſt either Perſons or Cauſes as evil; yet certainly the Hand of God upon ourſelves or others is wiſely to be conſidered, and it will very often be found a Puniſhment pointing to the Sin; and it is certainly an Argument of very great Stiffneſs and Pride of Heart, not to obſerve and acknowledge it, and a ſure Preſage either of utter Ruin, or, at leaſt, of a heavier Stroke. Any that is ſet againſt the Lord, and will not be humbled, whether by what he ſees on others, or what he feels on himſelf, *Iſa.* xxvi. 11. ſhall find he hath an Overmatch to deal with, that will either bow him or break him.

Think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in Jeruſalem?] Our Saviour goes not to ſearch into the Quarrel, and to condemn or juſtify either the one Party or the other; that was not for his Purpoſe, his Aim was to rectify the Miſtake of thoſe he ſpoke to, and to draw forth of their own Relation what was moſt proper for their Uſe. Much of our hearing and telling of News hath little of this in it; and with moſt Perſons it doth not reliſh, to wind Things that Way. Some, even good Perſons, do

accuſtom themſelves, and take too much Liberty, in an empty fruitleſs Way of Entertainment in this Kind; and, if we make any Remark, it commonly keeps abroad, comes not home to ourſelves. Be it any Judgment, be the Perſons great Sinners in a ſinful Courſe, yet they are not always the greateſt of all, becauſe they ſuffer, and others eſcape, as we readily think, and they here conclude concerning thoſe *Galileans*.

God is to be adored and reverenced, who uſeth his own Freedom in this, does Injuſtice to none, yet chuſes them on whom he will do exemplary Juſtice, and whom he will let paſs, and gives not Account of this to any; ſome leſs wicked have been Enſamples to them that were much more wicked than they.

Do not flatter your ſelves in the Conceit of Exemption from ſome Stroke which others in the ſame Way with you have fallen under, or even from ſome Courſe which others have run and ſmarted in, and bear yourſelves big upon the Name of *God's People*. But tremble before the Lord, and ſearch your own Hearts, and let us think, though we may not be guilty of ſuch publick ſcandalous Evils, as others fall into, and are puniſhed for, yet how full are we of ſecret Malice, Pride and Luſt, *&c.* and wonder at the Patience of God to ourſelves, while Multitudes have been ſwept away round about us. Think you that they that have died by *Sword* or *Peſtilence* of late, *were greater Sinners* than we that are behind? Oh no! *but except we repent, we ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Enow of theſe Arrows are ſtill in God's Arſenal; and though he uſe not theſe to us, yet remember Death and Judgment and Eternity are before us, and they call for wiſe and ſpeedy Conſideration and Repentance.

Oh!

Oh! you that go on in your Tranſgreſſions, after all that is come upon us, that were Drunkards and Swearers, &c. and are ſo yet, what think you, becauſe the Heat of publick Judgments is abated, is there no more Fear? Have you made a *Covenant* with *Hell* and *Death*, and gained Quarter of them, that they will not ſeize on you? Oh! that will never hold; they will not, nor cannot keep to you. And if you hold on your Courſe, when the Day of Viſitation ſhall come, how much heavier ſhall it be by all this Forbearance? You ſhall wiſh you had been cut off with the firſt. The Day is at hand, when it ſhall be eaſier for them than for you; only, the Advantage is, that there is an Exception yet ſounding in your Ears, *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.*

I beſeech you, my Brethren, enter into your own Hearts, and be not always out of yourſelves, and ſo out of your Wits; conſider the Lord's Way and your own, and wonder at his Goodneſs! Why am not I made an Example to others, as well as ſo many have been made Examples to me? Now, let me fall down at his Feet and beg of him, that as he hath not made me an Example of Juſtice all this while, he may now make me an Example of Mercy and free Grace to all that ſhall look on me.

Our Saviour, to their reported Inſtance, adds another himſelf, that was no doubt late and recent with them, to the ſame Purpoſe, and in the ſame Strain, *Think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in Jeruſalem? I tell you, Nay; but except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* Not juſt after the ſame particular Manner, but the *Likeneſs* is in *periſhing*, "You ſhall as certainly periſh as they are "periſh'd:" And this to many impenitent Sinners is verified in their cutting off, even by ſome temporal Judgment, after long abuſed Forbearance; and

often

often very like thoſe they have ſeen Inſtances of, and would not be warned by; thus, to many of the *Jews*, in the Death of many thouſands of them, and the Deſtruction of their City by the *Romans*, in which there was much Likeneſs with the two explanatory Judgments here mentioned. But the univerſal and far more diſmal *periſhing* of unrepenting Sinners is, that Death that lies unſeen on the other Side of that Death we ſee, and are ſo afraid to look on. Oh! ſaw we the other, this would appear nothing, it would be the only Terrible of all Terribles indeed. And how terrible ſoever, it is the unfailing Attendant of Unrepentance; theſe God hath linked together, and no Creature can ſever them, Continuance in Sin and *Periſhing*, Repentance and Life. It is Faith indeed that lays hold on our Pardon and Life in Chriſt, and by that we are juſtified and ſaved: Yet ſo as this is ſtill true; ſo that the other nowiſe croſſes it, that there is no Life without Repentance. And this wrongs not the Goſpel at all, to preach and profeſs Repentance, yea, it is a prime Point of preaching the Goſpel: And here we find the Great Preacher of the Goſpel, who is himſelf that great Subſtance and Subject of the Goſpel, this is his Doctrine, *Except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.* There is no right preaching of the Goſpel but the Doctrine of Repentance muſt be in it; the drawing and turning of the Soul to God, from whom it is gone out by Sin: This the Goſpel aims at; and there is no preaching of Repentance without the Goſpel. The Law indeed diſcovers Sin, but that is not enough to work Repentance, for that there muſt be a Door of Hope opened to a Sinner, at which he may come in, hoping to be pardoned and accepted, upon returning and ſubmitting; this the Goſpel only does. And whenſoever the Prophets preached Repentance, there was ſomewhat that always expreſſed

preſſed or imported the Notion of the Goſpel; God declaring himſelf reconcileable, ready to forgive and receive him.

Now, not ſpeaking of the Nature of Repentance, which here were pertinent, I ſhall ony deſire you to ſeek to know the Nature of it, by feeling the Power of it within you *. Oh! happy they that do: Were the Sweetneſs of it known, we might perſuade moſt by that; but that cannot be known, till we be perſuaded and brought to Repentance. The Delight in thoſe Tears, the Pleaſure in crucifying Sin, even the moſt pleaſant Sins; the Soul then in its right Motion, when turning towards God, finds itſelf moved ſweetly; but it is thrown, and diſtorted, and diſappointed in turning from him, and following ſinful Luſts: But here, Neceſſity is the Argument, the higheſt Neceſſity; if it may be neceſſary for you *not to periſh*, then is it neceſſary for you *to repent*. Had any of you an Ulcer, though painful, to be lanced, yet if told *it muſt be*, elſe you'd die; that makes a Man call for it, and entreat it; Lord, what is the Madneſs of the Minds of Men! Do we believe that there is ſuch a thing after all that is here, as *Periſhing* and *Saving*, *eternal Death* and *eternal Life*, and can we think on any thing elſe, ſo as to forget theſe, to be ſlight and unreſolved concerning them, and yet eat, and pleaſe the Fleſh, and ſeek to make other Things ſure, and leave theſe to their Hazard? The God that made your Hearts perſuade them; for who elſe can?

The Parable that follows, follows out the ſame Doctrine of Repentance, and that upon the Motive of *Patience* and *Forbearance*. Particulars would not be overſtrained and ſqueezed for Morality; the main

* *Malo ſentire compunctionem, quàm ſcire ejus definitionem.* Kempis.

is God's Diſpenſation, and his Expectation in his Orchard the Church.

Our Saviour is much in this Way of teaching, calls in natural Things to ſerve ſpiritual Ends, and ſo all are fit to do, had we the Faculty to extract it. A ſpiritual Mind draws that which is ſymbolical with it out of all: Such may fruitfully walk in the Gardens and Orchards, and feed on the beſt, though they ſtir nothing. The Great Lord is himſelf the Planter of his Vineyard; his own Hand ſets each Tree, and the Soil is fruitful; there is Sap and Moiſture. This is to be underſtood of his viſible Church and Ordinances; for the Planting here is that. Chriſtians are much compared to Things living, growing and fruitful, to the Vine and Fig-tree; there is ſo high Engagement to be ſo, *Iſa.* v. and real Chriſtians are truly ſo.

And he ſought Fruit thereon.] Good Reaſon had he ſo to do, having ſo planted it; thoſe Trees that are left wild in the barren Wilderneſs, no Fruit is to be expected on them, at leaſt no Garden Fruit, ſuch as grows in the Garden of God. Some Natures have ſome Kinds of Fruits, and ſome ſweeter than others, but they are but wild Figs. God's Delight is to *come into his Garden*, and there *eat his pleaſant Fruits*. Natural Men may, after their Faſhion, be temperate, and patient, and charitable; but to believe on God, and love him above themſelves, and from ſuch Principles to do all they do, this is not to be expected.

Now all that are planted in the Church of God, are in Name ſuch Trees as ſhould have their Sap in them, (that is, Faith and Love) and bear anſwerable Fruits: They are called *Trees of Righteouſneſs, the Planting of the Lord, that he may be glorified*, Iſa. lxi. He himſelf knows who are indeed ſuch, and knows that the reſt can bear no ſuch Fruit, yet in regard of out-

outward Diſpenſations and their own Profeſſion, he ſpeaks after the Manner of Men; *he comes and ſeeks Fruit.* Men that think they may live in the Face of the Church, and make Uſe of his Ordinances, and yet be as excuſably barren of all the Fruits of Holineſs, as if they grew upon a common Heath, 'tis ſtrange they ſhould not conceive their own Folly, and know that God reckons otherwiſe, and according to the Ground he hath ſet them in, and Manuring he beſtows on them, looks for ſome ſuitable Fruit.

But the moſt are thus, they conſider not what they are, think it a kind of impertinent Importunity, to preſs them to Holineſs, to Meekneſs, to bearing Wrongs, to heavenly Mindedneſs, to ſpiritual Activity, and Uſefulneſs to others. Why, 'tis ſtrange, what think ye, my Brethren, are we Chriſtians, or, are we not? We have a Name, that we are active, and are dead; Congregations are filled with ſuch; and when the Lord *comes and ſeeks Fruit*, in the greateſt part he finds none. If Lies, Oaths, Curſings, *&c.* were the Fruits, enough of theſe; but Zeal for God, Love to our Brethren, Self-denial, Humility, if theſe be they, alas! where are they? So much Preaching, Sabbaths, Faſts and Covenants; and where is Fruit, *the Fruits of the Spirit? Gal.* v. Oh! empty Leaves, and ſome promiſing Greenneſs, but the moſt belie the Hope they give. And we of this Land, who are engaged ſo high, what could have been done more? Though lying far North, yet have we much of the Goſpel Sunſhine, and are bound by our own Promiſe, and Covenant, and ſolemn Oath to God, to be more fruitful, yet this is ſtill broke. Who that had ſeen our firſt Meltings into Tears, or fair Buds of ſtirring Zeal, could have imagined we would have been ſo barren?

Now, the Conference with the Vine-dreſſer about it, though that is much for the Fulneſs of the Parable, yet may imply God's imparting of his Thoughts, concerning his Church, to his faithful Miniſters, ſuch are included under that Name here; for he blames not him as neglective, but complains of the Barrenneſs of the Tree. In the cutting down may be ſome pointing at Church Cenſure; but, I conceive, it is rather to expreſs God's Purpoſe concerning the barren Tree, than to give Order or Command about it. Doubtleſs, the Lord would have his Vine-dreſſers ſenſible of the Fruitleſſneſs of his Trees, though it be not by any notable Neglect on their Part.

Theſe three Years.] This expreſſes the great Patience of God, that ſpares ſo long, ſpeaks not of *cutting down* at the very firſt. Thus, of long Time hath he waited on many of us, many more Years than to the ſtrict Number here named; on how many of us a great Part of our Lifetime? Whence is it that we are not afraid of this Word, as it were, here ſounding in ours Ears, *cut it down, why troubles it the Ground?* takes up Room, and does no Good, yea, hinders and prejudges others, as all ungodly fruitleſs Perſons in the Church of God do.

The Vine-dreſſer entreats and obtains an Year more: This the faithful Labourers of God will not fail to do; to Preaching to his People, they will join much Prayer for them, that they may be made fruitful, and mean time may be ſpared, and not periſh in their Unfruitfulneſs, will double their Endeavours in the Senſe of that Danger, to all other Pains will add this, the watering them with Tears. *God is gracious, and eaſy to be entreated*, and forbears yet, and waits. Oh! it is not yet too late. Any of you that at length are ſtirred to any real Deſires of Fruitfulneſs to him, I dare give you Warrant to be confident

confident of his not only Forbearance upon ſuch a Deſire, but his favourable Acceptance of it, as a good Sign, yea, as already a Beginning of Fruit. Indeed, in caſe of Peoples remaining barren after all, the End will be to be *cut down*; and to every fruitleſs and godleſs Perſon amongſt you, it is not long to that Day, it will be upon you e're you are aware. As *John* preached, *The Ax is laid unto the Root of the Trees; therefore every Tree which bringeth not forth good Fruit is hewn down, and caſt into the Fire*, *Matth.* iii. 10. God is taking his *Ax*, as it were, and fetching his Stroke at you, and you know not how ſoon it may light, and you be *cut down*, and cut off from all Hopes for ever, never to ſee a Day of Grace more, nor hear a Sermon more, cut down and caſt into the Fire to burn, and that never to end. Oh! for ſome Soul to be reſcued, were it even now, Oh! To-day, *To-day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts.*

Real Chriſtians, though not altogether barren, (that is impoſſible) yet are not ſo plentifully fruitful, little of the Increaſes of God, ſuch as he may be invited to his Garden for, ſuch as the Vine-dreſſers may rejoice in, yea the Maſter himſelf. The Lord maketh a kind of Boaſt of us, as Men will do of Trees in their Gardens, that they have much Fruit, though poſſibly having a meaner Appearance and Shew than moſt of the reſt. Oh! what a Joy and Glory were it to our God, to have unobſerved obſcure Chriſtians abounding in ſweet ſpiritual Fruits, loaden'd with Fruit, and hanging down the Head, ſtooping the lower, ſtill the more humble for it, referring all to himſelf, living to him, doing all for him. But alas! we are empty Vines, bringing forth Fruit to ourſelves, ſerving our own Wills and Humours, and barren to him: But for this End are we *planted in the Houſe of God*, and ingrafted into the

Son

Son of God, that bleſſed living Root, to be fruitful to his Praiſe; it is his Credit, *Herein is your heavenly Father glorified, that ye bear much Fruit*, &c.

Now for this are requiſite, 1*ſt*, Much Prayer; for tho' here he ſpeaks as an ordinary Maſter, yet it his ſecret Influence does all, *From me is thy Fruit found*; and Prayer draws down that. 2*dly*, Much Faith in Chriſt, living to him, and drawing Sap from him; ſuch as do all in his Strength, and are much in Application and Attraction, ſhall be found the moſt abundant in all choice and ſweet Fruits; that *abide in him*, that is, in the very Actings of Faith are more in him than many others that yet are in him: But, alas! this is a Thing we ſpeak much, and know little of.

SER-

SERMON X.

Preached before my Lord Commiſſioner and the Parliament, 14th *November* 1669.

JOHN XXI. 22.

—— *What is that to thee? Follow thou me.*

OF all that ever lived on Earth, the moſt bleſſed was this Handful and ſmall Company our Lord chooſed for his conſtant Attendants, to ſee his divine Miracles, enjoy his ſweeteſt Company, and to hear his divine Doctrine. What a holy Flame of Love muſt have burn'd in their Hearts, who were always ſo near the Sun of Righteouſneſs. It was indeed a ſad Hour, wherein that was eclipſed, and the Lord of Life lay dead in the Grave: And what a Deluge of Joy was in their Hearts when he roſe again; and what a Tranſport was it when they ſaw him aſcend, and a ſhining Cloud kiſſing his Feet, and parting him from them. In the Interval, as he had riſen himſelf, ſo he is raiſing them from their Unbelief. St. *Peter* not content with a bare forſaking his Lord, had alſo denied him; but he falls not a quarrelling, but ſpeaks of Love to them, and blows up theſe Sparkles of Love with this threefold Queſtion. St. *Peter* anſwers fervently, but moſt modeſtly: Whereupon his Lord gives him a Service ſuitable to his Love, *Feed my Sheep*; for which none are qualified but they that love him. But when he grows bold to ask a Queſtion, he gets a grave Check, and a holy Command, *What is that to thee? Follow thou me.* This was a tranſient Stumble in one

who

who but lately recovered of a great Diſeaſe, did not walk firmly. But it is the common Tract of moſt, to wear out their Days with impertinent Enquiries. There is a natural Deſire in Men to know the Things of others, and to neglect their own, and to be more concerned about Things to come than about Things preſent. And this is the great Subject of Converſation: Even the weakeſt Minds muſt diſcant upon all Things, as if the weakeſt Capacities could judge of the greateſt Matters, by a ſtrange levelling of Underſtandings, more abſurd and irrational than that of Fortunes. Moſt Men are beſide themſelves, never at home, but always roving. It is true, a Man may live in Solitude to little purpoſe, as *Domitian* catching Flies in his Cloſet. Many noiſome Thoughts break in upon one when alone; ſo that when one converſeth with himſelf it had need be ſaid, *Vide ut ſit cum bono viro.* A Man alone ſhall be in worſe Company than are in all the World, if he bring not into him better Company than himſelf or all the World, which is the Fellowſhip of God, and the Holy Spirit. Yet the Matters of the Church ſeem to concern all, and ſo indeed they do; but every ſober Man muſt ſay, all Truths are not alike clear, alike neceſſary, nor of alike Concernment to every one. Chriſtians ſhould keep within their Line. If it be the Will of our Great Maſter, that the Order that hath been ſo long in the Church continue in it, or not, *What is that to thee?* It is certainly a great Error to let our Zeal run out from the excellent Things of Religion, to Matters which have little or no Connexion with them. A Man though he err, if he do it calmly and meekly, may be a better Man than he who is ſtormy and furiouſly orthodox. Our Buſineſs is to follow JESUS, and to trace his Life upon Earth, and to wait his Return in the Clouds. Had I a ſtrong

Voice

Voice, as it is the weakeſt alive, yea, could I lift it up as a Trumpet, I ſhould ſound a Retreat from our unnatural Contentions and irreligious Strivings for Religion. Oh! what are the Things we fight for, compared to the great Things of God. There muſt be a great Abatement of the Inwards of Religion, when it runs wholly to a Scurf. God forbid any think, that except all be according to our Mind, we muſt break the Bond of Peace. If we have no Kindneſs to our Brethren, yet let us have Pity on our Mother, and not tear her Bowels; and indeed, next to the Grave and ſilent Shades of Death, a Cottage in ſome Wilderneſs is to be wiſh'd for, to mourn for the Pride and Paſſion of Mankind. How do the profane Wretches take Advantage from our Breaches? But if there be ſuch here, becauſe of the Weakneſs, Folly and Paſſions of ſome Men, is it Folly to follow Jeſus? Are ſome ridiculous, and for that will you turn Religion into Ridicule? If you do, it will at laſt turn a *Sardonick* Laughter. Becauſe we contend for a little, is the whole an Invention? Will the Pillars be brangled, becauſe of the Swarms of Flies that are about them?

There is an eternal Mind that made all Things, that ſtretched out the Heavens, and formed the Spirit of Man within him; let us tremble before him, and love the Lord Jeſus. Our Souls have indelible Characters of their own Excellency in them, and deep Apprehenſions of another State, wherein we ſhall receive according to what we have done upon Earth. Was not Jeſus the Son of God declared to be ſuch by his Miracles, but chiefly by his Reſurrection from the Dead? Hath there not been received and tranſmitted to us, through all Ages, many Martyrs following him through Racks and Fires, and their own Blood, to his Glory? And ſhall we throw off all theſe? Better be the pooreſt, weakeſt

and moſt diſtempered Perſon upon Earth, with the true Fear of God, than the greateſt Wit and higheſt Mind in the World, if profane; or though not ſuch, if void of any juſt or deep Senſe of the Fear of God, *For a living Dog is better than a dead Lion.* Some religious Perſons are perhaps weak Perſons, yet in all Ages there has been greater Nobles, and more generous Souls truly religious, than ever were in the whole Tribe of Atheiſts and Libertines.

Let us therefore follow the holy Jeſus. Our own Concernments concern us not, compared to this. *What is that to thee?* may be ſaid of all Things beſides this. All the World is one great Impertinency to him who contemplates God, and his Son Jeſus. Great Things, Coaches, Furniture, or Houſes, concern the outward Pomp or State of the World, but not the Neceſſities of Life; neither can they give Eaſe to him that is pinched with any one Trouble. He that hath twenty Houſes, lies but in one at once; he that hath twenty Diſhes on his Table, hath but one Belly to fill: So, *ad ſuper vacua ſudatur.* All are uncertain, ſudden Storms fall on; and Riches fly away as a Bird to Heaven, and leave thoſe who look after them ſinking to Hell in Sorrow.

A Chriſtian is ſolicitous about nothing; if he be raiſed higher, it is that he deſires not; if he fall down again, he is where he was. A well fixed Mind, though the World ſhould crack about him, ſhall be in Quiet: But when we come to be ſtretched on our Death-bed, Things will have another Viſage; it will pull the Rich from his Treaſure, ſtrip the Great of his Robes and Glory, and ſnatch the amorous Gallant from his fair beloved Miſtreſs, and from all we either have or graſp at. Only Sin will ſtick faſt and follow us, theſe black Troops will clap fatal Arreſts on us, and deliver us o-

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ver to the Jaylor. Are theſe Contrivances, or the dark Dreams of Melancholly? All the Sublimities of Holineſs may be arrived at, by the deep and profound Belief of theſe Things. Let us therefore ask, Have we walked thus, and dreſſed our Souls by this Pattern? But this hath a nearer Aſpect to Paſtors, who ſhould be Copies of the fair Original, and ſecond Patterns, who follow nearer Chriſt; they ſhould be imitating him in Humility, Meekneſs and Contempt of the World, and particularly in Affection to Souls, feeding the Flock of God. Should we ſpare Labour, when he ſpared not his own Blood? How precious muſt the Sheep be, who were bought at ſo high a Rate as was the Blood of God? Oh! for more of this Divine and Evangelick Heat, inſtead of our diſtempered Heat. This is the Subſtance of Religion, to imitate him whom we worſhip. Can there be a higher or nobler Deſign in the World than to be God-like, and like Jeſus Chriſt? He became like us, that we might be the more like him. He took our Nature upon him, that he might transfuſe his to us. His Life was a Tract of doing Good, and ſuffering Ill. He ſpent the Days in Preaching and Healing, and often the Nights in Prayers. He was holy, harmleſs and undefiled, and ſeparate from Sinners. How then can Heirs of Wrath follow the Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World. Humility, Meekneſs and Charity were the darling Virtues of Chriſt. He came to expiate and extirpate our Pride; and when that Majeſty did ſo humble himſelf, ſhall a Worm ſwell? No Grace can be where the Mind is ſo ſwelled with this airy Tumour. He was meek, and reviled not again; nor did he vent his Anger, though he met with the greateſt Injuries. The Rack of his Croſs could make him confeſs no Anger againſt thoſe who were draining him of his Life and Blood; all

he did was to pray for them. Charity was ſo dear to him, that he recommended it as the Characteriſtic by which all might know his Diſciples, if they loved one another. But alas! by this may all know we are not his Diſciples, becauſe we hate one another. But that we may imitate him in his Life, we muſt run the Back-Trade, and begin with his Death, and muſt die with him. Love is a Death. He that loves is gone, and loſt in God, and can eſteem or take Pleaſure in nothing beſides him. When the bitter Cup of the Father's Wrath was preſented to our Lord, one Drop of this Elixir of Love and Union to the Father's Will ſweeten'd it ſo, that he drank it over without more complaining. This Death of Jeſus myſtically acted in us, muſt ſtrike down all Things elſe, and he muſt become our All. Oh! that we would reſolve to live to him that died, and to be only his, and humbly follow the crucified Jeſus. All elſe will be quickly gone. How ſoon will the Shadows that now amuſe us, and pleaſe our Eyes, fly away?

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Precept X. - - - 437.
A Diſcourſe on *Matth.* xxii. 37, 38, 39. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind; and thy Neighbour as thyſelf*, &c. 445.
A Diſcourſe on *Hebrews* viii. 10. *For this is the Covenant that I will make with the Houſe of Iſrael after thoſe Days, ſaith the Lord; I will put my Laws into their Mind, and write them in their Hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they ſhall be to me a People.* - - - - 453.
A Short Catechiſm. - - - 461.

Ten Sermons, never before publiſhed.

SERMON I.

Rom. xiii. 11, 12, 13, 14. *And that knowing the Time, that now it is high Time to awake out of Sleep; for now is our Salvation nearer than when we believed*, &c. - - - - 466.

SERMON II.

Pſal. cvii. 43. *Whoſo is wiſe and will obſerve thoſe*

Things,